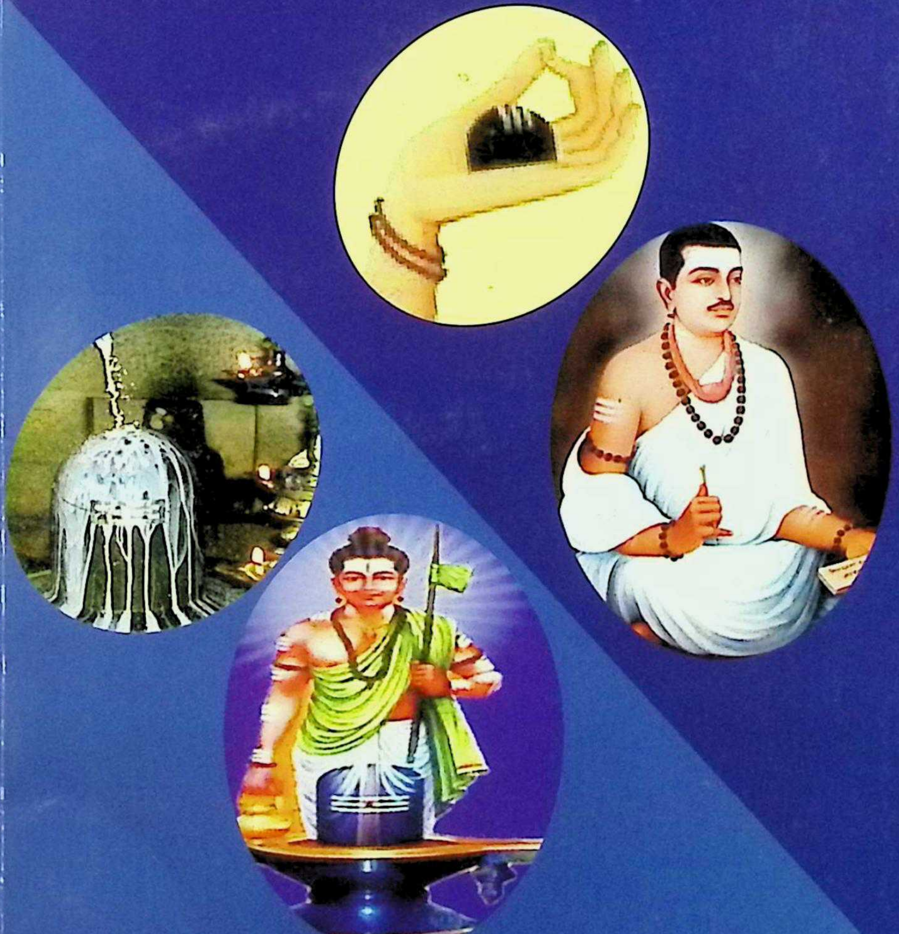
Lingayats and Veerasaivas The Same or Different?

Dr. S.M. Jamdar, I.A.S. (Retd.)



Lingayats and Veerasaivas - The Same or Different?

Dr. S.M. Jamdar, IAS (Retd.)

JAGATHIKA LINGAYATA MAHASABHA
No.53, 2nd Main Road, 3rd Cross, Chakravathi Layout, Palace Road
Bengaluru-560 020. Ph.: 080-2336 7799
e-mail: jagathikalingayatamahasabha@gmail.com

Lingayats and Veerasaivas - The Same or Different?
Authors by : **Dr. S.M. Jamdar, IAS (Retd.)**
Published by : **Jagathika Lingayata Mahasabha**, No.53, 2nd Main Road, 3rd Cross, Chakravathi Layout, Palace Road, Bengaluru-560 020. Ph.: 080-2336 7799

First Print : 2020

© : Author

Pages : vi+108=114

Copies : 1,000

Price : ₹ 50/-

Book Size : 1/8 Demy

Paper Used : 70 GSM Maplitho

Cover Design : Smt. Muktha B. Kagali

Printed at : **Sathyasri Printers (P) Ltd.,**
No.16/1, 3rd Cross, 2nd Main, Kasturiba Nagar,
Myosre Road, Bangalore-560 026.
Ph.:080-22748811 Mob.: 9442864761

Preface

It is strange but true that Lingayats today are a confused lot. In their religion there are two systems of opposing philosophies, two streams of mutts juxtaposed with each other and two sets of contradictory beliefs and customs. One is the 12th century system of pure advait philosophy and a stream of Viraktha mutts based on the teachings of Basavanna and other Sharanas. The other is the system of dwait philosophy and a set of small number of Shivachar mutts of Panchacharyas derived by wrongly mixing Sharana principles with the prevailing Vedic and Brahmanical beliefs and customs. An average Lingayat, unknowingly, believes in both systems.

Since early twentieth century, with the discovery of the growing number of hitherto hidden wealth of Vachanas, Lingayats are slowly but surely learning the true nature of their religion, their monasteries, the customs and beliefs based on teachings of Basavanna and Sharanas. This is leading to huge changes in the Lingayat community. Institutions thought to be sacrosanct so far are losing their sanctity and force. This includes Panchacharyas, Sivachar mutts, Veerasaivism and certain seemingly secular organizations like Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha, Shivayoga Mandir,

addapallakki procession, Samayachar, use of crowns and ornaments by the pontiffs of Lingayat mutts and so on.

But politics of vote banks, in a third world, third rate, weak democracy like ours, is encouraging continuation of the confusions so that single vote bank serves the political and communal ends. Luckily, that is also losing out. Splintering of the society into communal divisions is becoming rampant due to reservation politics and intercommunity competition for scarce resources.

In this scenario, this small book ventures to clear the clouds of continuing confusion about whether Lingayat and Veerasaiva are one and the same. In doing so, it draws upon fundamental reference material from the Agamas, the basic religious book of Veerasaivas - Siddhant Sikhamani and Sivatatvasar - the beliefs and customs of Veerasaivas and their craze to imitate Brahminical ways. It is a clearly established fact that excluding Ishtaling, Shatsthal, and Ashtavaran, all other practices between Veerasaivas and Lingayats are different and even opposite.

A discerning reader may easily find why and how Veerasaiva influence misled the entire Lingayat community for nearly two centuries. I hope that this small book opens the eyes of the semi-blind community of Lingayats.

28.02.2021

- Dr. S.M. Jamdar

CONTENTS

Chapter-1 1
Introduction to the Conflict

Chapter-2 15
Dimensions of Confusion over Lingayat Vs Veerasaiva Debate

Chapter-3 28
What Evidence Veerasaivas Give to Prove That Lingayats and Veerasaivas Are the same?

Chapter-4 40
Shivagamas Separate Lingayats from Veerasaivas

Chapter-5 47
Siddhant Sikhamani, the Holy Book of Veerasaivas Separates Veerasaivas from Lingayats

Chapter-6 57
Sivatatvasar Separates Lingayats from Veerasaivas

Chapter-7 59
Why Many Scholars Used Veerasaiva and Lingayat as Synonyms?

Chapter-8 68
Veerasaivas, Panchacharyas and A Brahmin Craz
(The Process of Veerasaivikaran or
Brahmanization of Lingayat)

Chapter-9 77
Questions that Panchacharyas and
Veerasaivas Must Answer

Annexures

Annexure-1 90
Annexure-2 97
Annexure-3 105

CHAPTER-1

Introduction to the Conflict

Lingayats are a major community in South and Peninsular India. Karnataka has the largest concentration of them who comprise around 18-20 percent of the state's population (as per Chinnappa Reddi Commission of 1990). Maharashtra has around 9 percent Lingayats, largely concentrated in southern Maharashtra. In Telengana Lingayats are 7 percent of the population and Andhra Pradesh Pradesh has about 5 percent of them. Tamilnadu and Kerala have smaller Lingayat communities. They are also scattered across Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh in the areas bordering Maharashtra. Totally there are about thirty million Lingayats in India.

This religious community came into existence and spread so wide and fast following the revolution in the Western Chalukyan kingdom in the latter half of the 12th century.

By now Lingayat faith and the community are nearly nine hundred years old. It is distinct from the Sanatan Dharma, in that it rose against the excesses of the Brahmanical beliefs and practices. It is another reform movement like Buddhism and Jainism about 18 centuries later. Sikhism, another later reform movement, is younger than Lingayatism by about four hundred years.

Like the corruption of original Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, Lingayat religion was also slowly corrupted by a sect within it now known as Veerasaivism. This corruption started happening almost five hundred years after the original Lingayat revolution. Today, the corrupting Veerasaivas have gone to the extreme limit of claiming that their sect was the original one; that they were the founders of Lingayatism and that the 12th century movement was only a reform within it! Such is the absurdity being imposed on the original faith in the last three hundred years.

The Turmoil Inside and Outside

The larger Lingayat community has been witnessing serious turmoils both externally and internally. Externally, the hegemonic forces of Sanatan Dharma claim that Lingayatism is a branch of Saivism; that Lingayatism is derived from Vedic and Agamic elements; that what is preached by Basavanna was already there in the Vedic tradition. These assertions relate not to Lingayat but to Veerasaivism. Sanatanis are basing their criticism derived from the features of Veerasaivism-not the original Lingayatism. Veerasaivism represents the corrupt version of Lingayatism not the original.

After nearly three hundred years of oblivion, the original writings and principles of 12th century revolution were re-discovered since 1920s. More than 130 bundles of palm scripts containing more than 23,000 Vachanas in Kannada have been rediscovered. They were hidden and suppressed by the intruders. This rediscovery has caused the realization and the knowledge of deliberate suppression of the Lingayat faith and community. The awareness so generated have led to the knowledge that Lingayat religion does not have much in common with the mainstream Sanatan dharma.

Beginning in the 1890s, the Lingayat awakening grew clearer in 1940's and and now it has come of age much stronger and louder! This realization has propelled the community to seek a separate religion status just like Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs.

Internal Rurmoil

The second turmoil is internal. It relates to the separation of Veerasaivas from Lingayatism. That these two segments do not have much in common is also a late realization. It is late because the very defining features of Lingayatism were discovered largely in the last one hundred years after nearly three hundred years of oblivian.This internal rift is leading to a vertical division within the community across the states into Lingayat vs Veerasaiva segments.

Surprisingly, the rift between two types of Lingayat mutts (clergy) has been known since at least three hundred years. But neither many of the mutts nor a majority of leaders of the Lingayat community dared to ask why the Lingayat mutts were so seriously divided beween themselves? and since when? and for what reasons?

Equally surprisingly, many leading Brahmin scholars like (T.S. Venkanniah, M.R. Srinivas Murthy, R.R. Diwakar, Masti Venkatesh Iyengar, A.K. Ramanujan) knew that Lingayats cannot be Veerasaivas. This knowledge of the differences between Lingayats and Veerasaivas is just about hundred fourty years old.

But the Lingayat liaty ignorant of the basic historical, metaphysical and philosophical differences between the two segments was so long following both the systems. Consequently, most of them were a confused lot. They did not know what they were doing. Yet they were doing because of the dead weight of the traditions and blind beliefs introduced by the Veerasaivas over the last two to three hundred years.

Why the Rift?

It must however be noted that while the Lingayat faith is nine hundred years old, the aberrations in the practices now being observed in the Lingayat community are a phenomenon of not more than three centuries, namely, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. What happened in this period, why and how are a bit hazy and much needs still to be explored although quite a lot is already known.

These aberrations appear to be the result of the Lingayat clergy slowly but surely turning away from the original purposes, philosophy and metaphysics of Basavanna and Sharanas and leaning more towards the overawing and overwhelming influence of the hegemonic Vedic, Agamic and Upanishadic concepts and practices against which original religion revolted and the same revolt spread in the twelve century till seventeenth century.

Most scholars attribute these changes to the growing entry of Brahmanical Aradhya Saiva Brahmains of Andhra into the Lingayat community.

While both the Lingayats and Veerasaivas follow three religio - spiritual concepts and rites – Isthalinga, Shatsthal and Ashtavaran – in all other aspects they are poles apart. Over the last hundred years this rift has been widening to such an extent that today it virtually threatens vertical division of the community.

The basic cause of the rift is the growing discovery of a large number (more than 23,000) of Vachanas (Kannada Shlokas) from the ancient manuscripts kept hidden for nearly three hundred years by the Mutts and their leading followers- most ofwho were inclined more towards Veerasaivism.

The newly discovered Vachanas of 12th century reveal universal brotherhood and democratic freedoms to critically assess everything that comes to the conscious mind. They preach equality of all men and full liberty to women with rights equal to men in all respects. It rejects caste system and every blind belief and practices associated with it. Its preachings are based on sound principles of rationality, objectivity and logical thinking. Veerasaivism is virtually an antinthesis of Basava Dharma or Lingayat.

Why were the Vachanas, the basic sources and preachings of Basavanna and other Sharanas hidden so long is the question now being asked by the people at large. Obviously, it cannot be anything other than the vested interest of those who were indulging in self propagation of Veerasaivism at the cost of Basava Dharma. The juxtaposed religions cannot live together for long. Growth of Vachanshastra and Basava Dharma meant undermining of Veerasaivism and vice verse!

Knowing fully well that the existence of Vachanas can be detrimental to their own existence, these vested interests indulged in the following so obviously:

(i) They wrote biographies of Basavanna depicting him not as a historical person (a human being) but a godling called Nandi (Vrishabh), a puranic character of Shaiva Puranas;

(ii) They created, propagated and made people believe that Basava (Vrishabh) was an Avatar of Nandi;

(iii) They corrupted Basavanna's and many other other Sharanas' thoughts expressed in the Vachanas by inserting wherever possible Veerasaiva word (in 150 Vachanas out of 23,000);

(iv) They also inserted 648 Sanskrit Shokas in those many Vachanas just to indicate that those thoughts were already in the Vedic sources (but only 648 out of 23,000).

(v) These corruptions were in line with the mystical puranic Sanskrit based Vedic practices which the Veerasaivas believe in and follow.

Certain Misconceptions

While dealing with the rift between Lingayats and Veerasaivas it is necessary to clarify three different simplistic impressions many carry in their thinking and attitude towards these divisions. They are:

1. that the differences between Lingayats and Veerasaivas are like the differences between the different sects among other religions;
2. that Lingayat is nothing but a Bhakti Movement like other such movements within Hinduism; and,
3. thatLingayats are a sect of Hinduism.

Comparisons are not Applicable

Many thinkers seem to compare Lingayatism and Veerasaivism as the two divisions or sects within the community comparable to similar sects in other religions. Such a feeling seems natural to those who do not know the nature and seriousness of the differences between these divisions and why, when and how they came about.

While there are many other causes of this rift and they will be examined in detail in different chapters of this small book. At the outset, it is necessary to clarify that the existence of the two divisions within the Lingayat Community cannot be compared to the divisions in other religions like Jains, Buddhists, Christians and Muslims.

There is a general tendency on the part of many Western and Christian writers (P.C. Brown, Max Weber, William Blake) to treat Lingayatism as a sect of

Hinduism. Such a tendency arises on account of (i) inadequate knowledge of Vachanshastra and (ii) mixing of Veerasaivism with the Lingayat religion derived from Vachanas. Many indigenous writers also have shown this tendency to get confused between Lingayat Vs Veerasaivism (Vachanshstra vs Siddhant Sikhamani and Vedic scriptures). Therefore, it is necessary to elucidate it further.

Sect Vs Religion

Let us compare Lingayatism vs Veerasaivism to the sects among other religions, for example,

(a) Digambar Vs Shwetambar sects among Jains;

(b) Hinayan Vs Mahayan and other Schools within Buddhism;

(c) Catholic Vs Protestant divisions among Christians;

(d) Sunni Vs Shias and other sects of Islam and

(e) Bhakti Movements in India for several reasons.

Jain Sects

Both Digambar and Shwetambar Jains agree on the fundamentals principles of Jainism, namely, (a) Five Wows; (b) Basic Scriptures; (c) 24 Teerthankars; (d) Vegetarianism (e) Moksha/Nirvan and (f) idols of Teerthankaras.

The difference between them are mainly over minor items like (i) Mahavir: whether he was married or not; his dates of birth and death; (ii) whether Mallinath was male or female (Malli); (iii) food taking manners; (iv)

Nirvan to women (v) whether idols should decorated or not; (vi) Dress codes of Munis; (vii) monks possessions and manners of eating food; (viii) Kewali; (ix) Whether the Namokar mantra be recited fully or partly and the like.

Buddhist Sects

Buddhists Sects like Therawd, Mahayan, Vajrayan etc., accept the fundamental principles of Buddhism such as (a) the goal of life to overcome suffering and cycle of death and rebirth and reach Nirvana through the path of (b) belief in Buddhahood, (c) taking refuse in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, (d) observance of moral precepts,(e)Buddhist monasticism, (f) Buddhist meditation and (g) the centrality of Buddha.

They only differ in the interpretation of Buddhist Scriptures and varying emphasis on different texts and methods.

Islamic Sects

Islamic sects like Sunny, Shiya, Ismailis etc., follow the fundamental beliefs and practices such as (a) reverence to Pygambar, (b) Ramzan fasting, (c) Haj pilgrimage, (d) Namaz, and (e) the stories of Old Testament etc.

They differ in their rules of marriage and divorce, traditions and certain festivals, relative importance to certain Gurus like Ali, Abu Bakr Siddique and others.

Christian Sects

All Christian sects – Catholics (Roman and

Orthodox) and hundreds of Protestant denominations—(a) revere Christ, (b) his Ten Commandments, (c) Old Biblical stories (d) Hell and Heaven. But they differ seriously in the interpretation of the New Testament, life styles of clergy, role of the Church etc.

1. Lingayats and Veerasaivas Differ in Fundmentals

But in case of Lingayats and Veerasaivas both of them differ in the fundamentals themselves. A few of these are just summarized here as follows:

(i) They do not agree on ***who founded the faith:*** Basavanna or Panchacharyas

(ii) They do not agree on ***when the faith was founded,*** the relevant dates and periods of history: 12th century or beginning of the Yugas

(iii) They do not agree on ***the very Scriptures***: Vachanshastra Vs Siddhant Sikhamani and Agamas, Upanishanda and Vedas

(iv) They do not agree on the very ***concept and nature of God***: Basavanna believed in invisible Single God whereas Veerasaivas believe in visible god and gods and goddesses in human form; temple culture vs absence of it; role of priest vs rejection of priestcraft, and so on

(v) They do not agree on the ***existence of hell and heaven***: Basavanna denies their existence whereas Panchacharyas affirm and believe in them

(vi) They do not agree on ***Moksha/Salvation:*** Basavanna says there is no Moksha and

Panchacharyas say there is

(vii) They do not agree on ***Rebirth:*** Basavanna denies rebirth and Veerasaivas believe in it

(viii) They ***do not have a single clergy:*** Virakta Mutts of Lingayats follow Basavanna and Gurumutts of Veerasaivas follow Panchachacharyas. Such dichotomies can be multiplied.

Having seen briefly how the two divisions in the Lingayat Community differ in the very fundamentals, one may wonder how these two polar opposites have managed to live side by side so long (three hundred years since 17th century). That is the central concern of this book.

2) Lingayat is much more than a Bhakti Movement

Overwhelmed by the Hindu rhetoric and hegemonic mindsets many Indian authors have shown a tendency to treat Basavanna's reform movement as another example of many Bhakti Movements in India ((i) Jayant Lele, 1981, Tradition and Modernity in Bhakti Movement, Vol 31, E.J. Brill, Leiden; (ii) H.M. Marulsiddhaih, Dimensions of Bhakti Movement in India, 1998, ABSSP, Mysore).

But such a view amounts to overly simplistic reductionism. Lingayat movement in the 12th century was not just an example of Bhakti Movement. Bhakti that is, devotional path is one of the three paths leading to God or salvation in Hindu thought. The other two are Jnana and Karma (knowledge and Action).

(i) Basavanna and his associate Sharanas were not so much concerned about salvation after death but salvation before death. This salvation has two dimensions – socio-economic and spiritual. On the socio-economic front the salvation was from the inhuman inequality and exploitation of the huge toiling masses by the priests, kings and merchants (unlike in Hinduism). It referred to the abolition of caste, removal of the blind beliefs, stoppage of unequal and cruel treatment of women and the down trodden. It referred to the adaption of simple life, treating all human beings, men and women alike. It preached hard and honest work (Kayaka) and against hoarding of wealth and to distribute the excess to the needy in the society (Dasoha).

(ii) On the spiritual front, Basavanna adopted devotional path. He rejected polytheism and preached monotheism. His God was invisible (Nirakar) as in Islam and Christianity and God resided in everyone's body. Body became the temple of God. Therefore, body cannot be punished or inflicted with any type of pain (like in Jainsim or Shiiates in Muharram). He preached married life and rejected Sanyasa (unlike Buddhism). He preached that after death one merges into the infinite invisible God who was in the body itself. Thereafter there is no birth or death.

He rejected hell and heaven. He rejected rebirth. He modified concepts of sin and merit. He recommended a set of basic moral values of equality and universal brotherhood. He also created a set of simple rules of life and pathway to God. He achieved a great following of lakhs people who are today spread across peninsular India (3 crore people). In other words, Basavanna created a parallel religion-not just a bhakti cult!

Outside Lingayat religion, like of which may be found only among Sikhs following Guru Nanak which is now recognized as a full-fledged religion.

Others like Kabir, Rohidas, Sena, Chaitanya, Namdev and Tukarm ended up as small cults in north and central India, Maharashtr a, and West Bengal. Thus Lingayat is neither a sect or a cult or part of any religion nor just a small segmental religious movement. It is a complete religion in itself with all its spiritual, socio-economic, cultural moral and philosophical components within itself as a coherent system of a religion. It has its own customs and traditions, ethics and morality (individual and collective) built into it over the last nine hundred years.

3. Lingayat is Not a Sect of Hinduism

The third patent misconception is that Lingayat is a sect of Hinduism. But philosophically speaking, Lingayat religion violates almost all the basic features of Sanatan Dharma. Indeed it was born to reform the society by freeing it from the clutches of Sanatan Dharma and its malcontents. Veerasaivism, on the contrary is claimed to be a branch of Hindu Saivism believing not only in its own holy book (Siddhant Sikhamani) but also in all Vedic scriptures.

These fundamental foundational features separate the followers of the two religious faiths, Lingayat (as a separate religion) and Veerasaivism (as a sect of Hindu religion).

How Lingayat is a separate and an independent religion rests on the differentiation between sect and religion.

Lingayat philosophy cannot be a sect since it violates all basic features of Hinduism (as laid down by the Hon. Supreme Court in Yajnapurushdaji Vs Muldas Vyshya 1966). Secondly, only two words are borrowed from Hinduism — Siva and Linga. But both have totally different meanings in Lingayat compared to Hinduism.

The remaining chapters of this book discuss in detail the fundamental differences between Veerasaivas and Lingayats and their sources.

●

CHAPTER-2

Dimensions of Confusion over Lingayat Vs Veerasaiva Debate

*T*he greatconfusion over whether Lingayats are Veerasaivas or vice verse or opponents is a deliberately created one. It is advantageous for many to keep and continue to keep the confusion going.

For Mutts, it is good if the confusion continues because they would have larger clientele and greater resourses.

For Lingayat politicians of all parties it is better to continue the confusion so that they can have bigger votebank. For certain other non-Lingayat politicians, it is better that Lingayats keep on fighting among themselves so that they can prevent Lingayats emerging as a dominant political force numerically and philosophically.

For the Veerasaiva Mahasabha it is better if the confusion continues which helps its survival and its own confused understanding of the two faiths.

Certain Facts

In Andhra region Lingayats (known as Jangamas) are the followers of Basavanna whereas Veerasaivas are the followers of Panchacharyas. In some areas few are confused between the two.

In Karnataka,however, Lingayats follow both Basavanna and Panchacharyas! Two juxtaposed religious systems existing in a single community is perhaps a rare example in the world! And that is the source and cause of all confusions confounding all their followers and scholars alike. Especially, the foreign scholars were the most confused!

Basavanna and Panchacharyas differ largely on everything except wearing of Linga icon and Shatsthal doctrine. Indeed, on most counts Basavanna's principles are opposed to the teachings of Veerasaiva Gurus. In religious terms these two segments cannot but be opponents of each other!

However, in Karnataka the words 'Lingayat' and 'Veerasaiva' are often used as interchangeable synonyms. But are they interchangeable? Are they synonyms? Not many Lingayats know the historical background of when such usage began and how!

Many Lingayats themselves do not know whether they are Lingayats or Veerasaivas. Even the incumbent president of the Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha says: "I am a businessman. I do not know whether I am Veerasaiva or Lingayat" (Prajavani 17-9-2017). Indeed, 95 percent of the original founders of this Mahabasha, including Sirsangi Lingaraj, Artal Rudragouda, Warad Mallappa, Puttanna Chetti, G.F. and F.G. Halakatti and others were not at all and could not have been Veerasaivas. But they were made? to believe that they were! That is the confusion continuing even to this day in Karnataka. There are several dimensions and actors who create and strengthen these confusions for varying reasons. Lets us see the major actors and their versions of the confusions.

1. North Vs South

In North Karnataka area most people do not know the word Veerasaiva and they always call themselves Lingayat. In South Karnataka, quite a few people say they are Veerasaivas. These regional differences have a huge historical reasons and biases which need elucidation.

2. Versions of Lingayat Swamijs

Another confusion is added by many Lingayat Swamijis including those heading influential mutts. They often explain that rural illiterate people use Lingayat word and literate urban people use the more Sanskrit sounding 'Veerasaiva' word to refer to their faith.

This version is too simplistic and it can appeal only to illiterate people who are the large followers of such mutts. It has many serious implications including the ones created by many such mutts for their own benefits and survival!

The obvious question is if literate and illiterate people use these two words to refer to the same single entity, what about the history, philosophy and practices of the two sets of mutts and people who follow them? Are they same? If so, why these mutts quarrelling like cats and dogs over the last two hundred years? What is the cause of their quarrel? Why are they so shy to tell the truth?

3. Divided Lingayat Mutts

Interestingly, Lingayat Mutts are divided into two opposing camps: one camp consists of the followers of Basavanna, the 12th century social reformer who founded Lingayat faith. Their followers are called Lingayats. Those mutts are known as Virakt Mutts, which are more numerous. The other camp comprises of highly Brahmanical Panchacharyas' followers. They are called Guru mutts or Acharyas. Their followers are generally referred to as Veerasaivas. ***This division itself is the proof of the difference between Lingayats and Veerasaivas.***

The philosophies and histories of these two sets of mutts as well as of Lingayats and Veerasaivas are not only different but on most points juxtaposed! ***The conflicts between these mutts date back to at least two hundred years. It is these conflicts which point to the vital differences between the Lingayats and Veerasaivas!***

4. Version of Panchacharyas

A third confusion is created by Panchapeethas, the Gurus of Veerasaivas. One of these Peethas, namely, Rambhapuri Swamiji has even compared Veerashaiva and Lingayat to the two eyes. He is right : ***they are two not one!*** Unfortunately, Rambhapuri Swamiji's one eye cannot see Basavanna and Sharanas! And the other eye can mainly see only Renuka and not so much other four Aradhyas/Acharyas! The reason is that Siddhant Sikhamani claims that Renuka, the supposed originator of Rambhaputi mutt, alone founded Veerasaivism. Further, this Peetha also claims that sharanas only reformed the original Veerasaiva faith which this Peetha claims to have established!

5. Version of Kasi Mutt

Yet another dimension of confusion is added by another of the Panchacharyas, belonging to Kasi Jangamwadi Mutt, who keeps repeating, ad nauseum, that 'Lingayat' refers to the process of receiving Inshtalinga from the Guru whereas Veerasaiva is the faith. His explanation is that the two together make it one. If it is so simple, why this Swamiji flares up when it comes to the preachings of Basavanna and Sharanas? (please refer to his statements in this matter in "Apoorva Sangam" 2003, ABVMS, Bangalore). But they fail to explain what Veerasaiva means and why it is Veera (brave or valient) and when did it originate historically? Ordinary people cannot understand this confusion and they simply nod to such statements of their revered Gurus.

The five Gurus or Panchacharyas are also called Aradhyas (Renukaradhya, Marularadhya, Panditaradhya, Ekoramaradhya and Vishvaradhya). They also affix Acharya to their names eg., Renukacharya, Marulacharya etc. Otherwise, they are simply, Renuka, Marula, Ekorama, Pandita, Vishvesh. The very existence of these Aradhyas or Acharyas or

Guru or Pancacharyas among Lingayats is a matter of astonishment. Such astonishment has been noted more by foreign scholars since a long time.

6. P.C. Brown's Views

As early as 1840 P.C. Brown was surprised over the existence of contradictory institutions among Lingayats (Jangamas). Virakta vs Gurumutts, Panchacharyas vs Basava tatvas. The 'Virasaivas' 'Aradhyas' and "four Aradhyas", or 'Chaturacharyas' existing among Lingayats (known as Jangamas in Andhra Pradesh) were an enigma to him. That is where for the first time the differences between these two words began to appear. Based on his extensive field study, Brown separated Aradhyas from Lingayats (Jangamas) on the one side and Aradhyas from Brahmins on the other side. His view is that these Aradhyas are neither here nor there but a hybrid group rejected by both.

7. B.L. Rice's Views on Confusion

In 1881 B.L. Rice while writing the Report of the Mysore Census of 1881 notes that "there has always been a confusion in the census notation in distinguishing between Lingayit as a caste and Lingayit as a sect of religious dissenters, under their various names Jangama, Lingadhari, Lingavanta, Sivachara & c." (page 66). This confusion is now further compounded many folds. Sivachar is generally used to refer to Veerasaivas and Lingadhari or Lingavanta or Lingayat is for Lingayats. Putting the two together has created many confusions.

Panchacharyas, the Gurus of Veerasaivas, insist that Veerasaivism is a part of Hinduism and it is a sect of it. But Virakta mutts and Lingayats affirm that Basavanna and Sharanas of 12th century rose against the Vedic and Brahmanical orthodoxy and therefore Lingayat is a separate religion in itself. They also hold Panchacharyas as later entrants and that they are corrupting the religion of Sharanas. B.L. Rice's above cited statement is to be seen in this light.

8&9. Havanur Commission & Chinnappa Reddi Commission

Post-independence period saw the continuance of the same confusion between Lingayat and Veerasaiva. The Havanur Commission for Backward Classes in Karnataka (1973) while using Lingayat word most of the time has said that they are also called Veerasaivas. Chinnappa Reddi Commission for Backward Classes (of 1990) also reiterated it again.

10. Questionable Government Order

Following the trend set by the two Commissions for Backward Classes, the Karnataka Government issued an order dated 14th June, 1995 (No. SWD 255 BCA 94) which says : "The castes 'Lingavanta' and 'Shivachars' are treated as synonyms of Veerasaiva Lingayat caste specified in annexure V, Category III(b) of Government Order No. SWD 150 BCA 94 dated 17th September 1994 and 31ist January 1995".

This order is questioned in several Writ Petitions pending before the Hon. High Court of Karnatak on the ground that there is no caste called Veerasaiva Lingayat. It is either Lingayat or Veerasaiva since the two are different.

Merging Lingayat with Veerasaiva calling them Veerasaiva-Lingayat is like merging east and west or south and north. Such an arrangement is only intended for administrative convenience. After all, the purpose of these commissions and the consequent government order is to identify the economically and socially backward groups. It does not, need not and cannot deal with the historical, philosophical and metaphysical aspects of any caste or religion. Therefore such classifications are only indications of the prevailing socio-economic conditions of the relevant groups and nothing else. However, such classifications are important and consequential for the followers since access to educational and employment is determined by those classifications.

11. Lingayat Agitation of 2017

The major agitation of Lingayats in Karnataka and Maharashtra in 2017 demanding recognition to Lingayat as a separate independent religion has brought out the age-long differences between Lingayats and Virasaivas to the foreground. Virakt mutts and Lingayats following Basavanna agitated for recognition of their faith as a separate religion. Whereas, Veerasaiva Panchacharyas insisted that it is a part of Hinduism.

Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha disagreed with Panchacharyas and insisted that it is not a part of Hinduism and that it should be recognized as a separate religion. Confused as the Mahasabha has been, they claim that Veerasaivas and Lingayats are the same!

Political parties were divided: Some supported the followers of Basava tattvas and others supported the Panchacharyas. A neutral group went along the confused category called Veerasaiva Lingayat!

What was known to scholars and the rival Lingayat mutts – Virakta and Panchacharyas – has now reached the common man. The media hype has spread it throughout the entire country and outside. Common people both Lingayats and non-Lingayats are now curious to know the facts, histories and philosophies of Lingayats and Veerasaivas.

12. Version of Veerasaiva Mahasabha :

The Akhil Bharat Veerashaiva Mahasabha was created in 1904 at a time when Veerasaivs had gained upper hand since 1850s. The well-meaning leaders of Lingayat community of those days were largely ignorant or deliberately kept in ignorance or conditions were such since 18th century that Sharan Dharma was deliberately suppressed; its history was hidden; its philosophy as revealed in the Vachanas was kept in dark. The ascendance of Panchacharyas was premised on the suppression of Vachanas. Misled by the circumstances this Mahasabha believed and worked under the dominant Veerasaiva influence.

No wonder that the incumbent President of the Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha asks: "Did Basavanna found the religion?" (Prajavani, 17

September 2017). Strange! Even after ten years of being the President of the Mahasabhas, he does not know this basic thing. He is however honest enough to admit: ***"I am a businessman. I do not know whether I am a Veerasaiva or a Lingayat".*** In fact, that is the knowledge level of many Lingayats at present.

Unfortunately, Veerasaiva Mahasabha seems to suffer from the loss of memory. It was this Mahasabha which had filed a Writ Petition in appeal (SLP) before the Hon. Supreme Court in which their affidavit clearly stated that Lord Basavanna was the founder of Lingayat religion and people hold him in great reverence. Mate Mahadevi, by corrupting the pen name of Basavanna has hurt the feelings of Lingayat community.

Therefore, they sought that her book by name "Vachan Deepti" should be banned. The Hon. Court allowed the appeal/SLP in 2017. How can the Mahasabha now ask: "Did Basavanna found the religion?" Does it not amount to telling lies, misleading the public and indulging in politics?

13. Veerasaiva Mahasabha Vs. Panchacharyas

Strangely, Veerasaiva Panchacharyas say Veerasaivas are Hindus and that there is no need for recognition to it as a separate religion (Prajavani September 5, 2017). On the contrary, Veerashaiva Mahasabha says that they are a separate religion. During, 1991 to 2013 at least, four times this Mahasabha has approached the Central Government seeking recognition as a separate religion in the Census (Prajavani, September 18 and 27, 2017). This reveals how

Veerasaivas and Lingayats are different. But this Mahasabha for reasons best known to itself still toes the dictates of the Panchacharyas.

14. Panchacharyas Vs Veerasaiva Mahasabha

Another point of major difference between Panchacharyas and the Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha is that Panchacharyas claim that they founded Veerasaiva religion. But Veerasaiva Mahasabha Website clearly states : "there is no other alternative than accepting the fact that Basavanna was the founder of the faith". How can one religion be founded by two different founders at different times on different philosophies? But this point is repeatedly dodged by that Mahasabha.

15. Groupism Among Mutts

Apart from Panchacharyas and the Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha, Lingayat mutts are also divided on the Lingayat vs Veerasaiva issue. Among these mutts there are clearly three groups, namely, Group One is Pro-Veerasaiva; Group Two is Pro-Lingayat; and Group Three is Lingayat-Veerasaiva which consists of mainly fence sitters.

Interestingly, heads of 99 percent of these three types of mutts all come from Jati Jangam group / caste of Lingayats. Since 1910 most of these heads of mutt are trained for several years in Sivayoga Mandir, a Convent for training future swamijis. This training center was set up to obliterate the history and philosophy of the two creeds and predominant position was given to Veerasaiva philosophy and principles ignoring the Sharan Dharma. Thus indoctrinated from the beginning and having innate pride of their own Jangama caste origin, most heads of these mutts, in the heart of their heart, have more inclination towards Veerasaivism than Sharana Dharma.

Paradoxically, since Sharana Dharma is far more popular and most appealing to the liberal and democratic ethos of India today most of these Swamijs never forget to speak about Sharana Dharma. Such appeal generates greater acceptability, ensures monetary support and popularity of mutts. Thus Lingayat mutts, barring a handful of them, are the biggest source of deliberate confusions perpetrated on the ignorant Lingayat community. They are also the cause of rifts, conflicts, caste divisions and largescale politicization of the community.

16. Sangha Parivar Vs Lingayat Agitation

In this on-going debate, outsiders like the Sangha Parivar led by the Rashtreeya SvayamsevakSangha, and the pro-RSS thinkers like S.L. Bhyrappa of Mysuru, Kalladka Prabhakar Bhat of Mangalore, late Sri.Vishveshvartirtha Swamiji of Pejawar Mutt also meddled into this razing dispute (Prajavavani, July 22, 25, 27, and October 4 and 5 2017 and April 28, 2018). Without exception and undoubtedly, they supported the Panchacharyas as it serves well their theory of Hindu Rashtra with a Single Religion, Single Language and Single Party agenda (Prajavani, March 25, April 4, 28, 2018).

The preceding illustrations sufficiently show how much a common man and ordinary Lingayats must have been confused by the many sides and many vested interests in the Lingayat vs Veerashaiva debate. This monograph is an attempt to verify the above mentioned oft-quoted statements of Panchapeethas and those of others mentioned in this chapter. In the process it draws the evidence from the relevant literature, available historical facts and the general observations of current customs, beliefs, traditions and rituals practiced by Lingayats and Veerasaivas. Since the evidence is too voluminous it is presented in a summarised manner. The presentation of facts and their analysis is divided into six different and relevant chapters.

●

CHAPTER-3

What Evidence Veerasaivas Give to Prove That Lingayats and Veerasaivas Are the same?

The highly emotive debate on whether Lingayats and Veerasaivas are the same is at least a hundred years old. During this long period, from time to time, the Veerasaiva Panchacharyas have been advancing certain points as the evidence to prove that Lingayats and Veerasaivas are one and the same.

We take a brief look at a few these claims here.

(1) "Veerasaiva faith is very ancient and that it existed long before 12th century (before Basavanna)"

How old is Veerasaivism has itself been a highly controversial issue. In another book, a detailed study of the antiquity of this claim has been made by this author (Did Veerasaism Exist Before 12th Century?, JLM publishers, 2020). Readers are advised to read it. However, a brief summary of it is reproduced here.

(a) Dr. L. Basavaraju (in Sivadas Gitanjali), Dr. Chidanand Murthy (in Bharatiya Sanskriti MattuVeerasaiva Dharma), Dr. Nandimath (in Veerasaiva Kaipidi), Dr. Savadattimath and a few other have taken a view that Veerasaivism existed before Basavanna.

Dr. Basavaraju says that Veerasaiva faith cannot be separated from Pashupat Saivism. He also says that the kernels of Veerasaism were found in the other Saiva branches like Dashagunas, Shodashas, and sixty three Puranas. He claims that probably Veerasaivism existed after sixty three Puranatans (of Tamil Saiva Siddhant) and before Sharanas. But his claims are just hypotheses because there was hardly any gap in time between Nayanmaras and rise of Sharanas. Basavaraju's dating of Veerasaivism between Purantanas and Sharanas was found to be fallacious since at least six Puratanas existed until twelfth century and there was not much gap between Sharanas and Puratanas. Basavanna praises their great devotion but criticizes their siddhant.

Secondly, Basavaraju admits that Madhava in his book "Sarva Darshan Sangrah" (Compilation of all Religions) does not mention anything about the existence of Veerasaiva in the thirteenth century. It is a fact because it did not exist then! But Basavaraju's reasoning that Pashupat and Kalamukhi were taken same as Veerasaiva. But he gives no other evidence for it.

Thirdly, he clearly and correctly says that Veerasaivism cannot be an independent faith by itself. It can at best be interpreted as a branch of Pashupat Saiva and that it borrowed certain features from Tamil Saivism.

Fourthly, Basavaraju's understanding of Veerasaivism is a mixture of Basava Dharma and Pashupat. But Basavanna rejected Pasupats and their dualism. Sharanas also rejected Tamil Saivism's Salokya, Sarupya, Samipya and Sayujya.

Moreover, Basavaraju's basic hypotheses and evidences suffered from fundamental logical fallacies and internal contradictions even in respect of the above cited points. He did not succeed in proving that Veerasaivism existed before 12th century.

(b) Dr. S.C. Nandimath clearly says that Panchacharyas' have no history and they have only imaginary Puranas. Further he says that Agamic bases for Veerasaivism are not correct (please see next chapter). He said that Panchacharyas' claim of being the founders of Veerasaivism are only puranik and historians cannot agree.

If it existed, he asks why are there no Veerasaiva books prior to 12th century, whereas all books about it abound only after 12th century.

He also says that if Veerasaivism existed before 12th century we do not what was its name. We do not know when and who founded it. All in all he is not sure that Panchacharyas were its founders and that it existed before 12th century.

(c) Dr. Chidanand Murthy separates Panchacharyas from Veerasaivism. On Panchacharyas he has always maintained that Panchacharyas are not the founders of Veerasaivism. He also has said that four of the Panchacharyas were 12th century sharanas and Kasi Peetha was created much later.

However, on Veerasaivism he claims that it existed prior to Basavanna. He dates it from 11th century. He claims that Jedar Dasimayya, Kondaguli Kesiraja and Ekantad Ramayya existed before Basavanna and they spread Veerasaivism.

But according to Abalur shashan Ekantad Ramayya was a contemporary of Basavanna. He was the most orthodox Saiva Brahmin who defeated Jains on the greatness of Siva. He did not establish any religion. Therefore, Veerasaivism existing before Basavanna on the strength of Ekantad Ramayya cannot be correct.

Similarly, Jedar Dasimayya was a senior Sharana who is praised by Basavanna in many of his Vachanas. Jedar Dasimayya's wife Duggale praises Basavanna in her Vachanas. If she and her husband lived prior to Basavanna, she could not have foreseen arrival or work of Basavanna. Therefore, Jedar Dasimayya, existing long before Basavanna cannot be true.

Kesiraja's "Sheel Mahatvad Kand" explaining several Sheelas of Veerasaivas is held to be a bogus book by three researchers (B.V. Mallapur, M.M. Kalaburgi and another). Kesiraja was prior to Basavanna. He was in all probability a staunch Veeravriti, a Saivite cult like Veeramaheshvars, who preceded Basavanna. Siddhant Sikhamani itself separates Veeramaheshvars from Veerasaivas and similarly Veeravritis were also not Veerasaivas. Indeed Veerasaivas seem to have borrowed many of their practices.

Thus all the three points raised as evidence by Dr. Chidanand Murthy in his efforts to prove the existence of Veerasaiva prior to Basavanna are not sound. But he does not take the antiquity of Veerasaiva to a great past and says that it probably existed in the eleventh century.

(d) Dr. Savadattimath's recent book (of 2018) onthe subject published by the Rambhapuri Peetha supporters from Hubli is a propaganda literature based on platitudes, presumptions and half-truths which are exposed in the book of this author (Did Veerasaiva Exist before 12th Century?)

(e) There are many others like H.M. Sadasivaiah, who base all their arguments on Puranas and recently written and questionable Uttar Agamas. Their arguments that Siva himself founded Veerasaivsm, that Panchacharyas descended to Bholoka to preach it, that Veerasaivism is as old as Siva, as old as four Yugas etc., are based on blind beliefs which no historian or researcher can agree with. Indeed, Dr. Basavaraju himself rejects all such arguments.

(f) But many Veerasaiva authors including the ones discussed here and others like H. Tipperudraswamy, S. Vidyashankar demonstrate a pronounced audacity not to accept facts which go against their patently held prejudiced views (for details see chapter13 of Veerasaiva Panchacharyaru Satya Vs Mithya of this author).

Foregoing discussion shows how questionable are the twin claims of Panchacharyas are: that Veerasaivism is older than 12th century and that Panchacharyas are the founders of it. More evidence is on the opposite side, namely, Veerasaivism is not older than 12th century and that Panchacharyas are not its founders!

(2) "That Basavanna got converted to Veerasaivism by Jatved Sivacharya"

Often Panchacharyas keep saying that Basavanna has said in a Vachan that "Shaivadinda Veerashaivanade". They say that it proves that Basavanna renounced his Saiva dharma and accepted Veerasaiva faith. Further, they claim that Jataved Sivacharya gave him Veerasaiva Diksha!

First of all, 'Jatved Muni' is the name used in certain Basava Puranas. But in the hands of Panchacharyas he becomes "Jatved Sivacharya"! It shows an attempt to corrupt the original statement in Basava Puranas and to co-opt him as their protagonist.

Two names appear in different BasavaPuranas which mention them as the family Guru of Basavanna's parents -Jatved Muni and Ishanya Guru. Whether the two of them are one and the same or different is not known. Neither of them is said to have given any Diksha to Basavanna.

Jataved Muni was a pontiff in the Agrahar of Kudal Sangam which was then known for its inclination towards Nath Panth. The presiding deity at Kudal Sangam is called 'Sangamnath' not 'Sangameshvar' which indicates the existence of Nath Panth there. Even Srishail was also a known centre of Nath Siddhas (R.D. Dere: Siddha Sampradaya Cha Itihas). Basavanna in his pen name mentions it as 'Kudal Sangam Deva'. Veerasaivism was not there then.

Thirdly, none of the Basava Puranas says that

Basavanna was given any Diksha by any Guru. Contrarily, all Basava Puranas say that Basavanna, as a boy, refused Upanayan Diksha and Yajnopaveet.

Fourthly, none of the Sharanas has said that Basavanna was given Diksha by anyone.

Fifthly, Basavanna's Vachana "Saivadind Veerasaivanade" (from Saiva I became Veerasaiva) which is quoted frequently by some Veerasaivas, is held to be one of the corrupted insertions by the Veerasaiva compilers during the 15th and 16th centuries. Thus, the claims that Basavanna was converted to Veerasaivism and that Jatved Muni gave Veerasaiva Diksha are baseless.

(3) "Basavanna worshipped Sthavarlinga" and it is false that Sharanas worshipped only Ishtalina and many Vachanas like 'nayanadalli nimma Muruti Tumbi' indicate it"

Biographically, Basavanna, as a Brahmin boy, studied in Kudal Sangam Agrahar of Saiva Brahmins till the age of 22. During that time he worshipped Sangamnath sthavar Linga there.

Similar was the case of most of the other Sharanas who were worshipping sthavarlingas before they got converted to Basava Dharma. Like Basavanna, other Sharanas also used names of such temple deities as their pen names out of their identification with those names as that of only God.

But after Basavanna founded Lingayat Dharma at a later stage of his life he not only stopped worshipping

Sthavarlinga but also forbade (i) worshipping idols (including worshipping sthavarlinga) and (ii) worshipping many gods. Almost all sharanas including Basavanna, Madival Machideva, Ambigar Chowdayya condemn in harsh words worshipping of Sthavarlinga.

Further, "nayanadalli nimma muruti tumbi" cannot be taken literally. It only implies Basavanna's devotion being total – physical, mental and spiritual. His every sense organ was immersed always in God. In the same sense, in another Vachan he says : "etta nodidaratta neene deva". Yet another Vachana of Basavanna says: "You are the eyes, you are the ear of the universe". Literal interpretation of Vachanas is improper and indicates deliberate attempt to twist the contextual meaning of such Vachanas.

(4) "Sharanas' Vachanas are not only in Kannada but also in Sanskrit and therefore, it is false that only Kannada is the language of Vachanas and Lingayat religion"

This is another falsehood. Almost all original Vachanas discovered so far are exclusively in Kannada. No other language was used by any Sharana.

It is true that recently, and purposely, Vachanas are being translated from Kannada to other languages for propagating that philosophy.

Some Puranas were also written in Telugu (Palkurike Somnath, Pidupurti Somnath, Nanjanarya and some others wrote in Telugu).

Two Puranas of Sharanas are in Sanskrit (Kanchi

Shankaradhyas, Keladi Basavappa Naikas). All these are after 12th century and written by non-sharanas.

Moreover, in about 648 Vachanas Sanskrit Shlokas are used (Immadi Sivabasava Swamigalu : Vachanagalalli Sanskritoktigalu). Strangely, even if these shlokas are removed from the respective Vachanas, the original meaning of the Vachanas remains unchanged. Thus it is obvious that Sanskrit shlokas were inserted into the shlokas from Vedas, Upanishads and Agamas etc., later by the Veerasaiva compilers of Vachanas during the Vijayanagar period. Perhaps the compilers were showing off their knowledge of Vedas and Upanishads. Probably, they wanted to show that many of the ideas of Sharanas were also echoed in Hindu scriptures.

(5) "Basavanna only reformed the pre-existing Veerasaiva dharma"

Basavanna reformed not Veerasaiva dharma but the entire Hindu society which was totally immersed in blind beliefs, inhumanity to lower castes, ill treatment of women, living on the labors of others. In the process he established a new religion. It was not his purpose to establish a new religion. But the violent reaction of the Sanatan forces led to the consolidation of ideas and practices preached by Basavanna and Sharanas which came to be known as Lingayat dharma or Vachan Dharma or Sharan dharma. There was no question of Veerasaivism being reformed alone if at all it existed!

(6) Apart from the above discussed false claims, over the last more than 150 years Veerasaiva authors like

Karibasava Shastris (N.R. and P.R.), Kashinatshastri, Sirsi Gurushantshastri, Davanagere Chandrasekharshastri and many others of that kind have gone on distorting the Vachana literature and characters of so many Sharanas.

Kashinathshastri and Chandrashekharshastri indulged in character assassination of Basavanna, Neelambika, Akka Nagamma, Akkamahadevi, Allam Prabhu and other sharanas (Gunda Shastri : Kashinathshastrigal Nija Jeevan Charitre; H.Ishvaran: Religion and Society of Lingayats of South India). Their aim was to discredit Sharanas in the eyes of Lingayats so that Veerasaivism is safe, and Panchacharyas are kept unaffected.

(7) In 1890 the Veerasaivas of Mysore led a huge agitation and succeeded in getting themselves recognized as "Veerasaiva Brahmins" from the Maharaja of Mysore. Later in the Censuses of 1901 and 1911 they got the Government to recognize that Lingayats/Veerasaivas had Chaturvarn System in their community and also that Panchacharyas founded the Veerasaiva faith (Census Reports of 1890, 1901 and 1911 of erstwhile Mysore state; Vijaykumar Boratti, 2020).

(8) Because of the overwhelming influence of Veerasaivas, the leaders of Lingayat community were misled into naming thier organization newly founded in 1904 as Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha.

(9) Further, in absence of Vachana Sahitya, the

ignorant Virakta Swamijs like Hanagal Kumarswamiji founded Sivayoga Mandir to train all furure Swamis into the philosophy and practices of Veerasaivism which totally distorted the Lingayat society since 1910.

(10) From 1920s due to the untiring efforts of Sri F.G. Halakatti, thousands of Vachanas began to be re-discovered. Other researchers joined him. 130 numerous collections of nearly 23,000 Vachanas Came to light.

(11) "Vachanshastrasar" in 3 Volumes (F.G. Halakatti), "Vachan Dharm Sar" (M.R.Srinivas Murthy), "Vachanshastra Rahasya" (R.R. Diwakar), Speaking of Shiva (A.K. Ramanujan), "Sayings of Basava" (Masti Venkatesh Iyengar) and numerous other treatises on Vachanas and lives of hundreds of Sharanas began to come out. All these very well suited the democratic ethos of the country. Growth of Vachana Sahitya dealt a death knell to the influence of Veerasaivas and their Panchapeethas. They are therefore, desperate and reactionary.

The foregoing discussion shows how palpably false are the claims of Panchacharyas and their supporters who argue that Veerasaiva and Lingayat are the same. The whole purpose in advancing such untenable arguments is, as certain Latin phrases say: ***Suppressio very, suggestio falsi*** **(suppress the truth and suggest the falsehood)! Second purpose is to discredit Basavanna and Sharanas as well as misinterpret their Vachanas so that people's beliefs in Lingayat are shaken.**

●

CHAPTER-4

Shivagamas Separate Lingayats from Veerasaivas

Veerasaivas place very heavy emphasis on Shivagamas as the source of their several beliefs, traditions and ritual practices. Lingayats on the contrary reject all Agamas as irrelevant. Indeed, Vachanas of Basavanna and Sharanas criticize Agamas in very harsh terms. Since Panchapeethas derive their strength from Agamas, it is necessary here to examine them more objectively.

Of the 28 Shivagamas only nine Shivagamas—Vatul, Kamik, Parameshvar, Veeragam, Svayambhu, Suprebhedagam, Sukshmagam, Karanagam and Chandrajnagama, here and there, very casually mention about Veerasaivism. It is therefore not true that all Agamas deal with Veerasaivas (Akkurmath 2004).

Most of the nine Agamas which deal with Veerasaivas are Uttar Agamas which means that they were written more recently and they are not very ancient originals.

Indeed, Siddhant Shikhamani, the most revered holy book of Veerasaivas, clearly mentions that Uttaragamas are their references (Shloka 5-14).

Many leading Veerasaiva Scholars (like S.C. Nandimath and Shanmukhappa Akkuramath) have expressed huge doubts about the very authenticity of these Uttaragamas. It is said that Uttaragams are not genuine books and that they were written and inserted by unknown Veerasaiva authors at later times.

Contrarily, Basavanna rejected all Agamas by saying "I chop off the nose of Agamas". Siddharameshvar said: "let Agamas be thrown to the winds". Therefore Agamic beliefs and Agama-based ritual practices are totally alien to Lingayats. Dr. S.C.Nandimath has beautifully summarized these irrelevant Agamic practices which are listed below.

(a) "Even if we accept that the much later Shivagamas to be genuine, these Agamas (e.g. Suprabheda, Vatula, Kamika) themselves preach the efficacy of caste system and different stages in life (Varnashrama-Dharma)" (1962, p 429), **But** as per Siddhant Sikhamani Veerasaivas, at least in theory, **reject Varnashramdharma which shows that Agamic literature is unnecessarily dragged into the discussion on Veerasaivism. This is especially true since Lingayats openly reject all Agamas.**

(b) "Suprabhedagama mentions five Gotras or Gocharas of Shaivas. (Suprabheda paad 2, patal 1; Kamika part 2, patal 28). These are Sivagochara, Shikhagochara, Jyothirgochara, Savitrgochara, and Vyomagochara". "Five sages connected with these are: Kasyapa, Kausika, Bharadhvaj, Gautam and Atreya each of which has further sub-gotras totally adding to 62 in number." (Nandimath 1962, p 430).

Veerasaivas do follow Gotras but **Lingayats do not have gotras or Sutras and they totally reject gotras. Therefore Virasaiva is different from Lingayat.**

(c) "Sapindikaran: After the pitryajna........helps the entry of the deceased into the Sivaloka" (Nandimath 1962, page 432). **Veerasaivas believe in some such things but Lingayats do not practice Shraddha, Pinda or Sapindikarana. They also do not believe in heaven or Kailas.**

(d) "Sivagamas enumerate many ceremonies for expiation (Prayaschit)....Japa, Rudrabhishek, Krccha, Chandraaya etc" (Nandimath 1962, 432). While Veerasaivas practice these things, **Lingayats do not practice Penance or Prayaschit or Expiation, Japa or tapa.**

(e) The Initiation: Of all the ceremonies, the initiation (Diksha) is the most important. It is of two kinds, viz, Samaya and Nirvana. ....Establishment of Kunda, Mandala and Kumbha....... use of Dharba grass, sacred ashes.... tying Shivadar, (yajnopavita)... performing homa, yagna, lighting of 'Shivagni' etc" (Karanagam slightly differs from Kamika and Suprabheda and Vatula in respect of Kumbha) are very important and essential. In Charyapada, Agnikarya, Astaka, Pakavidhi, Samskaras, Sapindikarana Ekoddhista etc., are emphasized" (Nandimath, 1962, p 434). Veerasaivas practice these customs but **none of**

these is acceptable to and not practiced by Lingayats.

(f) "Through the influence of Karma, souls travel in 84,00,000 matrices, experience ups and downs, and born in this or the other worlds of the Universe, which consists of transmigration (Moksa) is achieved by the grace of Lord Siva" (Nandimath, 1962, p. 438). These concepts also are found among Veerasaivas but not among **Lingayats who believe that anyone truly embracing Ishtalinga is freed from Karmas, Paap and Punarjanma.**

(g) Parameshvaragama in its Kriyapaad contains elaborate details about temple architecture, construction methods, materials to be used, strict adherence to Vastu in the building of temples. It also lays down complex rules for making of idols of numerous gods and proportions of their body parts, and the materials that may be used etc. In its Charyapaad it lays down comprehensive rules and procedures for performing puja, various puja materials, types of puja,auspious time and muhurta for doing puja and so on. It also prescribes certain rules to be followed by the priests who perform puja at the temples. **Veerasaivas to a large extent believe and practice these prescriptions. Lingayats do not follow any of them since worship of Idols, sthavarlinga in temples as well as mediation of priests are rejected in Lingayat philosophy.**

(h) "Sukshmagama-tantra VI 65-69 mentions six sthalas of Virasaivism. The parameshvaragam deals with the philosophy of the Sat-sthala, showing a tendency to interpret the Sthalas in a cosmic sense. VI-VIII. Mantra, Varna, Chakra, etc.," (Nandimath, 1862, p 444). **Obviously, it is wrong according to Lingayatism to take the six Sthalas to Varna, Chakra and Mantra.**

(i) "The Parameshvaragam chapter XVI deals with making of various kinds of Lingas and chapter XIII of the same contains methods of the Lingapuja which is exactly, similar to that of Virasaiva" (p. 444). "But according to Parameshvaragam Virasaiva Diksha seems to be different" (p.443). **This Diksha method is more Vaidic than Lingayat; secondly, different kinds of Lingas and different types of Pujas relate to worship of Sthavarlinga in Temples involving Archaks both of which are rejected by Lingayats.**

(j) "According to Vatulagam, Saivas are of four types: **Samanya, Mishra, Shuddha and Vir**(p.337)...... **One who believes no other god and follows Veeravrita is called Veersaiva" (p.338)**....."Among Virasaivas there are three divisions, namely, **Samanya, Vises, and Nirabhari** (p.338)..... Nirabhari should renounce worldly life, concentrate on Siva, carry a stick, wear Kashaya dress, tiger skin, and Koupeen, grow hair (matted), smear vibhuti, beg for food and eat less" (page 339). **Contrarily, Lingayatism does not approve of Sanyasa or mendicancy nor strange Vritas of people like Veeravritis. So Veerasaivas and Lingayats cannot be**

the same.

(k) Veeravrita includes 64 sheelas (listed by P.M.Giriraju in his Kannada translation of Kondaguli Kesiraja's **Sheel Mahatvad Kand)** but six are important: "(i) worship Siva with great devotion; (ii) Don't criticize or use bad words about Siva and his devotees; (iii) If others criticize, rebut it. Don't tolerate it, protest, but if weak, leave such a place; (iv) Believe that the Linga given by guru during diksha should be treated as life, treat linga, body and life as one; (v) If one fails to observe these vritas or if linga is lost one should die; (vi) Veerabhadra symbol should be protected from aliens" (Nandimath, ibid, p.339). **There are no such Sheelas etc., among Lingayats.**

(l) Parameshvaram lists seven divisions among Saivas: **"Virasaiva, Adisaiva, Anadisaiva, Anusaiva, Mahasaiva, Yogasaiva and Jnansaiva** (Nandimath, ibid,pp.350-356). Apart from these, there are Ganpatya, Vairabhadra, Bhairava, Nandikesh, Shambhakaumar, Pyshachi divisions also". It also describes the procedure to conduct **Homa and Yagna** elaborately in Patala four and **Kunda, Mandala and Kumbha, Shivagni, etc. How can such a religion be Lingayat which outrightly condemns homa, Yagna and Sivagni?**

(m) Sukshmagam identifies seven types of Saivas: Anadi, Adi, Maha, Anu, Awantar, Pravar, and Antya **based on their castes which means Varnashramadharma.** Although Virsaiva is not in the main list of Sukshmagam it is mentioned in a separate verse. Most probably it is added later. **Since Lingayatism rejects, totally, caste system irrespective of its Vedic or Agamic roots it cannot be Veerasaiva at all.**

All the thirteen major practices and tenets of Veerasaivas explained above are based on the nine Shivagamas. Lingayats do not accept or believe any of these practices. Thus the two faiths differ drastically from each other. To that extent, claims of Panchapeethas that Lingayats and Veerasaivas are one and same cannot be true nor can they be acceptable.

●

CHAPTER-5

Siddhant Sikhamani, the Holy Book of Veerasaivas Separates Veerasaivas from Lingayats

Veerasaiva Panchacharyas claim that Siddhant Sikhamani (SS for short), is their Holy Book. It is a highly controversial book. When was it written, its author's real identity, its contents and their originality are all highly contested. First of all, it is not an ancient book as claimed Panchacharyas. It was written most probably after 15th century based on Vachanas and two identical sources, namely, Jakkanarya's Sanskrit "Ekottar Shatsthali" and Mahalingadeva's "Ekottar Shatsthal" (H.Devirappa; H.Tipperudraswami, Kalburgi; Chidanand Murthy). Its originality is suspect as it has copied shlokas from 57 other books listed by Immadi Sivabasavswamiji.

There are 14 different versions of Siddhant Sikhamani! Collecting certain portions from them a so called standard version has been published by the Kashi Jangamwadi Mutt of the Panchacharyas.

So much publicity of Siddhant Sikhamani is going on and is funded by the Panchacharyas. Its Parayanas are being organized. It is got translated into more than 20 languages by the Kasi Mutt. Its web version is also provided.

Disregarding all the controversies mentioned above, for arguments sake,we take it that Siddhant Sikhamani is the Holy Book of Veerasaivas as they themselves claim. Now let us see how its contents and teachings separate Veerasaivas from Lingayats.

The descriptions in 55 pages of the third and fourth chapters of Siddhant Shikhamani provide most authentic evidence to prove how Veerashaivas are different from Lingayats. It also proves how Lingayat and Veerashaiva are juxtaposed to each other on the following counts.

(1) Siddhant Sikhamani (in Shlokas 3-1 to 8) beautifully describes Kailas as Devaloka where Shiva, Parvati and Pramathas live in eternal bliss. Kailas is made of silver rocks, golden pillars and nearby is Manas Lake.The silver rocks look like mirrors reflecting the beauty of celestial nymphs moving around; the inner chamber of Shiva is lit by the radiance of rubies, its outer door is decked and Shankh and Padma are placed on the sides; its roof is covered with stars; its walls are made of pearls. Shiva sits on the throne of rubies and diamonds. Around it are trees bearing flowers like Mandaar, Bakula, Ashok, Mango where bees hover buzzing; cuckoos are singing in Pancham Svara; Kinner girls' melodious music fills the air.

On the contrary, for Lingayat Sharanas there is neither Kailas nor Naraka. They don't believe in

Devaloka or Mrityuloka. In their belief both Naraka and Kailas exist on this earth itself and that one must experience both in this life itself while being alive.

Therefore, based on Siddhant Sikhamani, on the belief in the existence of Kailas as a separate world for Shiva, Veerasaiva and Lingayat cannot be the same.

It should be noted that Veerasaiva faith derives its foundation from Hindu Puranas. Needless to say that Puranas are imaginary stories in which Sharanas being very rational thinkers did not believe.

(2) Siddhant Sikhamani Shlokas 3-9 to 23 describe graphically Shiva as a man in human form. He wears all those things described in the Puranas such as tiger skin, elephant skin, damru (rattle drum), trishul (trident), cobra, matted hair, Ganga (river), Chandra (moon) etc.

For *Lingayats, contrarily, Shiva is formless, invisible, and pervades the whole universe. Such Shiva cannot wear any dress as described in SS. His existence cannot be seen but only felt.*

Therefore, on the point of SS describing Shiva in human form and Lingayats asserting formless god, Lingayats and Veerasaivas cannot be the same.

In Hinduism both concepts of Saakaar God (Visible god in some form) and Niraakaar god *(formless and invisible god) exist. But most people worship only Saakaar god. Siddhant Sikhamani derives the concept of saakaar shiva from Hindu Shaivism.*

Lingayats reject concepts of Veerasaivas believing in Saakaar Shiva. Its implications are many: first of all, belief in saakaar god leads to idol worship, temple culture and priestcraft; secondly, belief in denial of temple entry to low castes; thirdly, belief in god in human form tends to impute all types of human qualities good and bad, marriage and children, emotions in gods (such as anger, jealousy, hunger, bravery, love and lust), intelligence and so on. Lingayatism, therefore rejects all such notions of Saakaar Shiva.

This is another major metaphysical difference between Nirakaar Shiva of Lingayats vs. Saakaar Shiva of Veerasaivas!

(3) Siddhant Sikhamani (Shlokas 3- 24 to 36) describes Parvati, sitting beside Shiva. Her breasts are touching him, she looks beautiful like lotus, shines like full moon, her two eyes resemble lily blooming at night, her eyebrows are as smart as Arrows of Kamdev, her lips as beautiful as red hibiscus flower. She is having beautiful and robust breasts, thin waist, her posterior looking like beautiful sand dunes, her feet as soft as tender mango leaves. She is wearing ornaments made of diamonds and rubies, emerald and sapphire, hers legs decked

with tinklets her arms adorned with armlets. All Ganas of Shiva are standing around Shiva and Parvati singing their praise.

Shiva and Parvati and Ganas are integral part of Veerasaivism since Shiva for Veerasaivas is Saakaar god. Veerasaiva philosophy is one of Shiva and Shakti combined (Shakti Vishishtadvait).

Parvati is not found in Lingayat religion since Shiva is not in any form. He has no family (Parvati, Uma, Ganga, Gouri, Devi etc.). He has no children (Skanda and Ganesh). He has no mount (Nandi) and he does not wear any of the things like tiger skin, elephant skin, Ganga, moon, serpent, and so on.

Lingayat philosophy is plain Advait: non-separation of man and god. Therefore, Lingayats cannot be Veerasaivas.

This is a major philosophical difference: Pure Advait of Lingayats vs Shakti-Vishisthadvait of Veerasaivas. How can the two be the same?

(4) SS describes graphically Shiva's Oddolaga or (grand conference or Durbar) where he is presiding and Parvati is seated next to him. All Pramathas are seated strictly according to protocol.

Contrarily, since there is no Kailas, no visible Shiva nor Parvati in Lingayat there is nothing like Durbar of Shiva, no curse no blessing for Lingayats. Thus Lingayats and Veerasaivas' beliefs are opposite of each other.

(5) Siddhant Sikhamani in Shlokas 3- 4 to 7 clearly state that Sankhya, Yoga, Pancharathra, Veda and Pasupatishastra are the basis of Veerasaiva.

Anyone with some knowledge of Vachanas can easily see how all these are openly rejected as the evidence or basis of Lingayat Dhrama by the Sharanas. ***Sharanas cannot accept Veda, Agama. Purana based Veerasaivism.***

(6) SS stresses importance of Karma and Punarjanma in shlokas 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 of chapter eighteen. But it also says that they can be solved by Gurubhode (18-17); ***Lingayat Sharanas reject Hindu concept of Karma and Punarjanma. Therefore, Veerasaiva and Lingayat cannot be the same.***

(7) SS believes in Pasupat Shaiva (shlokas 39, 42, 44, 45 and 46 in chapter ten and in shlokas 20 and 23 of chapter eighteen); Sharanas reject the dualistic Pasupat philosophy; Shloka 1.32 of SS clarifies that Veerasaivism is Pasupat Shaivism and it tells all Veerashaivas to apply their minds to realise Pasupata tatvas.

Again it should be stated that Lingayat Sharanas do not accept the dualist Saiva Pasupat principles. **Basavanna, Allama Prabhu and many other Sharanas have clearly rejected Pasupat (Basavanna's Vachana 1254; Allama's Vachanas 780, 789, 800, 801 in Mahasamputa) Therefore, Veerasaivism cannot be the same as Lingayat religion.**

Indeed, Pashupat is the oldest branch of Shaivism. By embracing Pashupat, Veerasaivas are simply trying to take their history to pre-Christian era.

(8) SS recommends in Shlokas 3 and 4 of Chapter 9 that Veerasaivas should worship both Sthavaralinga and Ishtalinga although it gives higher preference to Ishtalinga (shlokas 16-18, 16-10);

Whereas worship of Sthavaralinga is forbidden in Lingayat (Basavann's Vachanas 382, 419, 806, 962; Allama's Vachana 1570 etc.).

Therefore, Veerasaiva cannot be the same as Lingayat since even the objects of their worship or prayer are not the same.

(9) SS recommends going to Kumbhamela, Kasi, Kedar, Kailas Parvat, Mount Meru, Mandar Parvat, Himalayas (Shlokas 10-74,; 9-47 and 11-47);

Lingayats oppose pilgrimage to any place since God for them is inside their body and therefore there is no need to search him outside. Accordingly Veerasaiva and Lingayat cannot be the same.

(10) SS refers exclusively to daan (gift) Not Dasoha (shlokas 9- 79 to 94); Lingayat only talks of Dasoha. The Daan and Dasoha are very different. Dasoha is giving a part of one's fruits of honest hard work. There should be no expectation of name and fame, nor expectation of earning Punya or avoiding paap, no feeling of being superior as a

giver nor the feeling of being inferior as receiver.

Daan, on the contrary, has all the opposites of Dasoha. SS borrows its concept of Daan mostly from Manusmriti. SS and Manusmriti even say that Daan should be given only to the Brahmans/ jangams, to the old, to the sick and the more deserving ones since their Karma makes them suffer like that.

(11) SS gives significance to Agamas (shloka 16-7); Shastras (shlokas16-19); and it recommends to follow Karmakand (Shloka14-20); More such Shlokas are the following

(a) **Shloka 1-25 of SS says:**

"Aalokya Shaiva tantraani
Kaamikaadyani saadaram |
Vaatulaantaani shaivani
Puraanaanya akhilaani tu ||"

"After piously reviewing and analysing Kaamika. Vaatula, Shaivatantras, Agamas and related Shaiva puranas",

(b) **Shloka 1.26 of SS:**

"Veda maarga avirodhen
Vishishtaachaara siddhaye |
Asanmaarga niraasaay
Promodaay vivekinaam ||"

"without opposing Vedas, for achieving the ends in unique ways leaving wicked means, for the satisfaction of rational persons";

(c) **Shloka 1.27 of SS:**

“ Sarvasvam veerashaivaanaam
Sakalaarth prakashanam |
Asprushtam akhilair doshai
Raadrutam shuddhamaanasai ||”

“Without touching all evils, revealing all meanings and all possessions with pure mind to the veerasaivas”,

(d) Shloka 1.29 of SS:

“Teshva agameshu sarveshu
Puraneshva akhileshu cha |
Pura deven kathitam
Devyai tannandaaay cha ||”

“In twenty eight agamas, in all puraanas, in the beginning, as told by Lord Siva to his wife Parvati and son Shanmukha” was told by Renuka on earth to Agasthya.

The four shlokas of SS in a sequence quoted above clearly state that “Virasaiva religion as explained in the twenty eight Agamas and all Shaiva puranas in a way without opposing the Vedas”. This has been discussed in the preceding section.

These Shlokas of Siddhant Sikhamani clearly reveal that they are contrary to the Sharana Dharma or Lingayat Dharma.

These Shlokas of SS are exactly opposite of the Lingayat religion which openly rejects all Agamas, Puranas and most Vedas. Thus Veeerasaivism cannot be the same Lingayat religion.

(12) Most significantly, SS says one should marry within one’s caste only (shloka 9-49); ***Lingayat***

promotes casteless marriages among willing persons. The two are therefore different.

Even after knowing all the Shlokas of SS, their Holy Book, if Panchacharyas keep on saying that Lingayats and Veerasaivas are the same, it follows that they are not telling the truth. Either they should disown Siddhant Sikhamani as their Holy Book and accept Vachanas of Sharanas or they should stop saying that the both are the same.

●

CHAPTER-6

Sivatatvasar Separates Lingayats from Veerasaivas

Sivatatvasar is a small book written by Mallikarjun Panditaradhya, a junior contemporary of Basavanna. He was attracted by the impact of Basavanna's reforms. He was keen to meet and join Basavanna, as revealed by his Basava Geet, a long euology he wrote after hearing the demise of Basavanna. His other biographical details explained in Panditaradhya Charitre of Palkurike Somanath and Gururaj Charitre, Aradhya Charitre, Chaturacharya Charitre reveal more about the basic principles of his faith. But a more succinct account of his version of Veerasaivism is revealed in his book Sivatatvasar.

Many scholars have written about Sivatatvasar. Its first critical review in Kannada was that of T.S.Venkannayya, the learned teacher of Kuvempu. When it appeared in 1921 in Prabuddha Karnataka (vol. xvi, no 2)it created a huge controversy in the Veerasaiva establishment since the sum and substance of the article was that the religion of Sivatatvasar cannot the same as the religion of Sharanas. He pointed nearly a dozen major philosophical differences between the two faiths. The main points highlighted are the following:

(i) According to Vachanakaras, those who receive Linga Diksha would be free from the effects of previous lives and Karma. But Sivatavasar does not subscribe to such a view;

(ii) Vachanakaras assert that after Linga Diksha all persons—Brahmin or Shudra—become equal. But Sivatatvasar sticks to Vedic and Smritis positions of inequality;

(iii) Sharanas forbid those who take Linga Diksha from worshipping other Linga or Sthavarlinga. But Sivatatvasar like Siddhant Sikhamani recommends worship of Sthavarlingas.

(iv) Many other Vedic customs are found lingering whereas in the religion of Basava they find no place.

Panditaradhya is said to be the same man after whom the Shrishail Peetha of Veerasaivas is named. He is different from Sripati Pandit who is said to have written Srikar Bhashya.

Sivatvasar preaches almost every major point that Siddhant Sikhamani teaches(mentioned in the previous chapter). Only difference between the two books is that Sivatatvasar does not say that Renuka founded this religion. It also does not create the imaginary story of Renuka preaching Agastya or Vibhishan the Ekottar Shatsthal Siddhant.

●

CHAPTER-7

Why Many Scholars Used Veerasaiva and Lingayat as Synonyms?

Not only Panchacharyas but even certain Veerasaiva scholars like Chidanand Murthy, L. Basavaraju, S. Savadattimath use Veerasaiva and Lingayat as interchangeable words for reasons explained here briefly. Savadattiumath is emboldened to say that "F.G. Halakatti, S.S. Basavanal, S.C. Nandimath, R.C. Hiremath, S.S. Bhusnurmath, M.S. Sunkapur, T.N. mallappa, L. Basavaraju, H.Tipperudraswami, Ja.ch.ni., S. Vidyashankar, Sidramappa Pawate, Chandrashekharshastri, Rangarao Diwakar, P.B. Desai, Shamba Joshi, Chidanand Murthy, Jirge Basappa, Artal Rudragouda, Hanagal Kumarswamigalu, siddhaganga Math Shivakumar Swamiji, Gangadhar Swamiji of Moorusavirmath, founders of Virasaiva Mahasabha, most scholars and most Swamijis, social reformers have all used the word 'Virasaiva' and discussed and decided Virasaiva as final" (p.84, 2017).

It must be pointed out that all the persons, swamijis, and scholars named above who used Veerasaiva instead of Lingayat word belong to the

post 1904 period following the creation of Akhil Bharat Virasaiva Mahasabha (ABVMS).

Before 1904

The second set of people who used Veerasaiva word belong to the period between 16th and 18th centuries. **Without exception they were all Veerasaiva authors of Veerasaiva books.**

M.M. Kalaburgi (Marg 4) has explored the beginning of the use of Veerasaiva word. He says that it first appears in the Bheemkavi authored Kannada Basava Puran of late 14th century. Thereafter, Tontad Siddhaling yeti, who was responsible for the creation and proliferation of Lingayat mutts in large numbers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries popularized Veerasaiva word. Subsequent authors tended to continue it on a regular basis.

The occurrence of the word Veerasaiva in the Vachanas is largely attributed as the corrupt insertions by the later compilers of Vachanas in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Most of those insertions are found in the so called "additional Vachanas" which were found in certain copies with questionable authenticity.

After 1904

The First reason for the mix up of Lingayat with Veerasaiva is the naming of the Pan-India Lingayat organization as "Veerashaiva Mahasabha" in 1904. It lent an air of authenticity and authority to Veerasaivas which it was not.

The Second reason is the wrong and ill-informed resolution of ABVMS to appoint only Jati Jangamas to head Lingayat mutts. It dealt body blow to Sharana Dharma. Because Jati is totally rejected by the founders of Lingayat religion.

In general usage Jangama refers to the travelling preachers of religion. In Lingayat parlance Jangama is used in two senses : (i) anything that is not fixed, which is moveable, which is changing and progressive; and (ii) a person who is a travelling preacher of religion.

When 'Jangama' became a fixed 'Jati' is itself a topic of historical research. Conversion of Jangam into a permant caste seems to be an act of Veerasaikaran of Lingayat community. Today's Jangamas are all Jati Jangamas!They are neither holy nor venerable Sharan Jangamas representing god incarnate. And they feel that they are Veerasaivas which itself is questionable! In Haryana there is a community of travelling Jangamas singing and dancing Saivism related events as revealed in the Sivagamas and Saiva Puranas.

Third reason was the most ignorant resolution of ABVMS that Lingayats accept Vedas and Puranas. Belief in Vedas, Agamas, Smritis, Upanishads and practices authorized in them is a patent feature of Veerasaivism as it stands today! It is another cause of popularization of the use of Veerasaiva word as it brought Lingayat into the Vedic frame that it had rejected originally.

Fourth reason is that ***most people until very recently did not know the differences between Lingayat and Veerasaiva*** *they used the two words as* *interchangeable honestly believing that Lingayat and Veerashaiva are one and the same. Such was the brain washing of Lingayats by the Veerasaivas in the preceding two hundred years!*

Fifth reason was the proliferation of Veerasaiva literature as against Sharana / Vachana literature. From sixteenth century, the Lingayat literature was dominated by Veerasaiva books. Excepting a few books like: (i) Chamaras's Prabhulinga Leele, (ii) Four Shunya Sampadanes, (iii) Chennabasav Purana, (iv) Akkamahadevi's biography, (v) Siddharam Charite, (vi) Bheemakavi's Basava Purana (1368), (vii) Sivatatva Chintamani of Lakkana Dandesh (15th century), (viii) Amal Basavaraj Charitre of Singiraja (15th century) the entire literature relating to Vachanas and Sharanas was sidelined or suppressed in the 16th and 17th centuries. Sanskrit dominated over Kannada. Since the mid - 15th century Virasaiva writers dominated the religious literature both in Kannada and Sanskrit.

During the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries more than ten puranas were written about Revansiddha and Chaturacharyas, the supposed founder/s of Veerasaiva faith.Such are: Siddhananjesha's Gururaj Charitre (16th century), Mallanna's Revansiddha Kavya, Bommarasa's Revansiddha Purana, Basavanka's Revansiddha Sangatya, Parvatesha's Chaturacharya Charitre (17th century), Gururaja's Panditaradhya Charitre, Neelakantharadhya's Aradhya Charitre, Revanaradhya's Sriguru Renuka Leela Vilas, Panch Brahmodaya Bhashya (1450),Niranjan Vamsha

Ratnakar, Renuka Leela Vilas of Revanaradhya, Kollipaki Mahatme by Chettaru Gangadharswami.

These books had nothing to do with Sharana Dharma. They were all trying to create a cult of Veerasaivism by making Renuka or Revansiddha as the founder of it. Later they added three more Aradhyas—Marularadhya, Ekoramaradhya and Panditaradhya. The last one to be added was Vishvaradhya in the early 19th century. They became the Panchacharyes of today!

Other Veerasaiva books which dominated the literature were the following : Puligere Mahalingdeva's Ekottar Shatsthal (15th century), Jakkanarya's Ekottar Sthasthali (Sanskrit), Kallumathad Prabhudeva's Linga Leela Vilas Charitre (15th century),Neelkanth Naganathacharya's Veeramaheshvar Sangraha (14th century), Sivatatvaratnakar of Keladi king Basavappa Bhupal (17th century), Jyotinatha's Shaiva Ratnakar (17th century), Jagadaradhya Nagesh's Sivajnan Samuchchaya, Tontad Siddhalingayati's books (1570),Gubbi Mallanarya's Ganabhashit Ratnamale and, Gubbi Mallanna's Veerashaivamrut Purana (1550 AD), Neelakanthacharya's Mallikarjuna Panditaradhya Charitre (1485), Mallikarjun Panditaradhya's Shivatatvasar (13th century), Nandikeshvara's Lingadharan Chandrike (17th century), Shadakshardeva's Rajashekhar Vilas, Nanjanarya's Ramnatha Vilas,Veerashaiva Kaustubha, Veerashaiva Dharma Shiromani, Veerashaiva Dharma Sindhu, Shaiva Ratnakar, Anadi Veerashaiva Sangraha, Sadhharma Deepike and so on.

Almost all books cited above were written after thirteenth century. Their authors were tryingto create a philosophy and metaphysics of Veersaivism, largely borrowed from Basavanna's Sharana Dharma. They also mixed and matched imaginary stories from the six Shaiva Puranas with Sharana Dharma. Here and there they added certain concepts from Vedic, Agamic, Upanishadic and Shastric sources.

Thus 648 Sanskrit Shlokas were inserted into the Vachanas by theVeerasaiva compilers of four Shunya Sampadanes (1425 AD to 1520 AD).

Siddhant Sikhamani which was also written between fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is a beautiful example of such a mix and match of Sharana's concepts with Puranic versions of Kailas, Durbar of Shiva, presence of Parvati and Skanda, Nandi, Bhringi, Veerabhadra, incorporation of Karma, Punarjanma, hell and heaven. Elaboration of Shatsthal Siddhant into 101 Sthalas, and conversion of Ashtavaranas into comprehensive ritualistic modes and making a fetish out of them were the result of such corruption by these authors. Nandikeshvara's Lingadharana Chandrike is another superb example of Brahmanization of simple Ishtalinga prayer of Sharanas.

By the 19th century Lingayat was overshadowed by the dominance of Virasaiva writers and Vachana literature was not only suppressed but also pushed to the oblivion.

Sixth reason was the rise of Panchacharyas (who by that time had made their existence safer) had created sufficient confusions by blurring the boundary markers between Lingayatism and Veerasaivism.

Consequently, in the 19th and the early 20th century, the European scholars like P.C. Brown, C.R.R. Carr, Abbe Dubois, E.R.Enthoven, Edgar Thurston had to use Veerashaiva as synonym of Lingayat. Each one of them said "Lingayat is also called Veerashaiva". They also described Lingayats as a "peaceable race of Hindu Puritans". They even said that "Lingayats revered Vedas although they reject Karmakand and later treatises on which Brahmans rely".

However, P.C. Brown was the first one who raised the doubt about "the four Aradhyas" and clearly stated that their antiquity or how they came to be revered by Lingayats were really surprising. He even drew attention to the points of differences between Aradhyas and Brahmins on the one hand and Aradhyas and Lingayats (Jangamas) on the other.

Enthoven and Thurston clearly explained the vain attempts of Mysore Veerashaivas to introduce Varnashram system among Lingayats which cannot fit in.

Seventh reason was the Mysore Veerasaivas Agitation of 1890s. In the 1880and 1890s The Veerasaivas of Mysore were claiming themselves to be "Veeramaheshvar Brahmins" or "Veerasaiva Brahmans" for which they led a huge agitation and got recognized as "Veerasaiva Brahmans" in Mysore (in 1891). Later developments as in Nizam State (in 1928) and Bombay State (in 1921) gave recognition to the Veerasaivas in those states as "Lingi Brahmans".

Under such circumstances was born the All India Veerashaiva Mahasabha (ABVMS) in 1904. Due to the prevailing wide-spread ignorance about Sharana Dharma (Lingayatism), the ABVMS resolved in its very first conference in 1904 that : "that Veerashaivas are Hindus; that they accept and revere Vedas; and, that only Jangamas should be appointed as heads of all Lingayat maths." Such was the travesty of truth due to the selfishness of Veerasaivas much against the protest by M. Basavayya, Panditappa Chikkodi and many other prominent Lingayat leaders who were present in that meeting.

Thus Conference of ABVMS in 1904 reinforced the wrong impression that Lingayat and Veerasaiva are one and the same. This impression spilled over to all fields of the Lingayat Community.

Eighth reason was the establishment of Veerasaiva Training Centre at Sivayoga Mandir (near Badami) in 1910 with the approval and support of the ABVMS in 1909 at Bagalokt confetrence. Its inauguration in 1910 ushered an era of 'Veerashaivikaran' of Lingayat religion. More than 2000 swamiji trained in that Training Centre are now heading the numerous Lingayat mutts. Mostof them are directly responsible for the distortion of Sharana dharma and imposition of Veerasaivism on Lingayat society.

Nineth reason was the absence of largescale Vachana Literature as it is today. Ninety percent of the (23,000) Vachanas were not yet discovered in 1904 or in 1910. Just about two thousand Vachanas (many corrupted ones) were included in the 15th and 16th century compilations of four **Shunya Sampadenes.**

It is only since the late 19th century and early 1920s that thousands of Vachanas were discovered and published owing to the pioneering and painstaking efforts of late Sri. F.G. Halakatti, Dr. R.C. Hiremath, Prof. S.S. Basavanal , B.S. Jirge, M.M. Kalburgi, and now Prof. Veeranna Rajur and many other scholars.

As a combined effect of all these factors, most of the scholars went on using the word Veerasaiva even in respect of hardcore Vachana sahitya honestly believing that Lingayat and Veerasaiva were synonymous. It had become a tradition of using Veerasaiva in place of Lingayat.

But most of the Government publications use the word Lingayat only (Census Reports, Backward Classes Commissions Reports, District Gazetteers, Government orders and so on since 1871).

●

CHAPTER-8

Veerasaivas, Panchacharyas and A Brahmin Craze

(The Process of Veerasaivikaran or Brahmanization of Lingayat)

Panchacharyas insist that Veerasaivas are Hindus. Their holy book, Siddhant Sikhamani also says that Vedas, Agamas, Shastra and Puranas are as holier to them as they are to Hindus (mentioned in the preceding chapters). Veerasaivas also claim that they are "Lingi Brahmans" or "Veerasaiva Brahmans".

Non-Brahmin Features

But Veerasaivas and their Panchacharyas do not wear Janeu; they do not grow the tuft of hair on the scalp, they do not practice Sandhya Vandan and Gayatri mantra; they do not follow five pollutions and the related purification rites (Sutaka and Shuddhikaran); they do not do Pinda and shraddh for the dead; they bury their dead; they keep their feet on the top of holy Sivalinga; - these are not Brahmanical features at all.

Blind Imitation of Brahmins

Way back in the 1940s, an eminent Indian social anthropologist from Mysore, M.N. Srinivas, popularized a concept called Sanskritization or Brahmanization. It says that lower castes in India try and emulate ways and manners of Brahmins to achieve higher and upward social mobility. Veerasaivas and Panchacharyas provide an excellent example to illustrate M.N. Srinivas's theory. Le us see how they have followed that theory!

First, collectively believing in the Brahmanhood, Veerashaiva followers of Panchacharyas fought for the status of Veeramaheshvar Brahmans or Lingi Brahmans in 1890s and 1920s. And the Maharaja of Mysore had given them that status. But Brahmans did not budge - they considered Veerasaivas as Shudras! Yet Panchacharyas have copied many ways of Brahmans and have learnt many things from them.

Second, Brahman Shankaracharya established five (four plus one) peethas and Panchacharyas too established five peethas!

Third, Brahmans have Gotras, so Panchacharyas also created gotras and Sutras (Renukagotra, Dharukagotra, Ghantakarnagotra, Vishvakarnagotra, Gajakarnagotra, Virabhadragotra, Bhringigotra, Nandigotra, etc.).

Fourth, Brahmans do Upanayana ceremony and Deeksha. So Veerasaivas copied Ayyachar for their boys only in the same way as Brahman Upanayana to their boys. Women are precluded from this ritual.

Fifth, Brahmans do Yajnas; so Veerasaivas (Panchacharyas) also do Siva-yajna, Siva-homa and light Sivagni.

Sixth, Brahmans do japa, tapa, fasting and going on tirthayatra - Veerasaivas also go to twelve jyotirlingas, 51 Shakti peethas, Saibaba, Sirdi Saibaba, Vithoba, Manickamma, and Kumbhamela in Prayag, Nasik, T. Narasipura etc.

Seventh, Brahmans are experts in panchang, muhurtha, auspicious days and dates and times, Rahukal, Gulikal, Yamagandakal and believe in Kundali, Vastu, and Jataka; Veerasaivas also try hard to become experts in such things and believe and practice all those muhurtha etc.,on many occasions.

Eighth, Brahmans love doing Murthipuja (idol worship) and like to work as Archaks (priests). Veerasaivas fought in courts for the right to work as priests and got it. So they dress like Brahman archaks, go to all temples and believe in all gods and goddesses and do idol worship.

Ninenth, like Brahmans, the Veerasaivas celebrate many holy days, do special pujas and prepare special foods as prasad. For them every Monday is the day of Shiva, Sivaratri is Shiva's special night, Shravana, Kartika are their special months. Nandikolu and Addapallakki, Laksha Deepotsav, and annual fairs (Jatras) and the like are routine Brahman-like rituaes of Veerasaivas and their gurus.

Tenth, each of the Brahman Muthadheeshas carriesa stick with a unique flag in the hand and a silver water pot. Panchacharyas also copied all those promptly.

Eleventh, Brahmans consider themselves as gods on earth. Panchachryas also think so. Therefore, they place their holy feet over the top of Shivalinga and tell the followers to use their Padodaka (water used for washing their feet) for Ishtalinga puja etc. Panchacharyas feel superior to everyoneelse. So in all public and private occasions they demand that their seat must be at a higher place or on a taller seat than others.

Twelfth, Brahmans love learning, reading and reciting Sanskrit and run Sanskrit schools. So from 1860s Panchacharyas asked their rich followers and branch mutts and co-traveller Virakta Mutts to start Sanskrit Schools and study Vedas and Agamas (though not sure how much they understand!).

Thirteenth, Brahmans, always use Sanskrit shlokas in their rituals. Veerasaiva priests and their local Jangam priests also always use only Sanskrit Shlokas in their own rituals (never mind their wrong pronounciation and accent!).

Fourteenth, Brahmans write their important religious books largely in Sanskrit since Kannada, Telugu, Marathi are not the languages of Gods! So also Veerasaiva scholars like Karibasava Shastri, Chandrashekhar shastri, Kashinath Shastri, Shivayogi Shivacharya, Kashi Peethadhipati Chandrashekhar Swamiji and many many others also wrote their books in Sanskrit.

Fifteenth, Brahmans believe that they go straight way to Kailas or Naraka after death; they believe in Karma and "punarapi jananam punarapi maranam" (cycle of life and death); Veerasaivas also are staunch believers in all such things.

Sixteenth, Panchacharyas claim that Siddhant Sikhamani is a very ancient book. It is a Brahman style Puran-like book creating numerous myths and legends in the process of pretending to preach Veerasaiva Siddhant. Researchers have firmly established that Siddhant Sikhamani is book which was written in fifteenth century or later borrowing from several books available then which were written by other scholars. Line by line, shloka by shloka in Siddhant Sikhamani are copied from 57 books without quoting from them. Kundur Sivabasava Swamiji in his Ph.D. thesis has listed verbatim the copied portions and their sources. But ancient means not as old as Kritayuga. It only means five hundred years (15^{th} century). In Ancient Monuments Act 'ancient' means anything not less than one hundred years! So Panchacharyas know the legal definition of ancient better for arguments sake.

Reversal of Sharan Dharma

An earnest reader can easily sense how all the sixteen features of present day Veerasaivas and their Pancha Peethas explained above are absolutely in juxtaposition to the basic tenets and teachings of Sharana Dharma founded by Basvanna. *One may observe how the process of Hinduization and Sanskritization of Sharanas Dharma through Panchacharyas is going. They are undoing all that Sharanas stood for. That is how they are surely and steadily corrupting the Sharana Dharma of Basavanna. More specifically one should note the following aspects.*

Firstly, being a born Brahman Basavanna threw away Janeu, rejected all Brahmanical beliefs, practices, and learning. While Veerasaiva Jangamas do not wear Janeu they do Ayyachar similar to Upanayan and Brahmin-like Deeksha ceremony to their boys around the same age as that of Brahmin boys.

Secondly, Basavanna rejected the authority of Vedas, Agamas, Puranas and Shastra as the root cause of all socio-religious and econo-political evils of India. Veerasaivas are revering them!

Thirdly, Basavanna did away with idol worship, temple culture, and mediation of priests. Instead, he gave Ishtaling to pray which(a) practice avoided prohibition of temple entry to the low castes, (b) abolished castes and preached equality of all human beings and (c) removed mediation of priests between God and devotee. Unfortunately, Veerasaivas have brought back idol worship along with Ishtalinga. They also fought for the right to work as priests and love to do all that Brahmin priests do for their own livelihood.

Fourthly, while Basavanna with the support of Anubhav Mantap founded a simple folk religion closer to the natural ways of life Panchacharyas have brought back the Brahmanical religion based on blind beliefs, meaningless rituals and inborn human inequality.

Fifthly, Sharanas rejected beliefs in Kailas, Naraka (hell and heaven), rebirth (punarjanma), Vedic concepts of Paap and Punya linked to Chaturvarna system. Panchacharyas have all of them wholesale.

Sixthly, Basavanna set aside caste distinctions, removed inequalities of women, abandoned beliefs in pollution and purification, refused to practice Pinda, Shraddha and Pitrupaksha. Veerasaiva scholars have argued that there are Veerasaiva Brahmans, Veerasaiva Kshatriyads, Veerasaiva Vaishyas and Veerasaiva Shudras. They have also not preferred widow marriage and have brought certain ceremonial purities.

Seventhly,most importantly, Basavanna preached physical labour and hard honest work to survive (Kayaka). He also said that everyone must give it to society what is inexcess of his needs (Dasoha). Panchacharyas insist on caste related duties (Karma) and no physical labour for Veerasaiva Brahmans. They preach Daana (alms) and not Dasoha.

Eighthly, if Basavanna rejected all blind beliefs in Muhurta, special days, special puja, Panchang, Veerasaivas have brought all of them back.

Ninenthly, Veerasaivas blind imitation of Brahmanical idol worship, priest craft, temple rites, Ayyachar, Japa, prayaschit, tirthayatra, carrying a flag and a stick and a silver water pot, performing Homa and Yajna, creating gotras are exact opposites of Sharana Dharma.

Tenthly,Basavanna totally rejected beliefs in Kailas and Naraka, Hindu concepts of Paap and Punya, and above all Karma related Punarjanma. But Panchacharyas have brought back all those rejects.

Finally, Basavanna and Sharanas wrote and spoke in plain folk language Kannada and later followers until thirteenth century also wrote in Telugu or Kannada. But with the entry of Veerasaivas and their Chaturacharyas all that disappeared largely yielding to Sanakrit as God's language! From fifteenth century, Sanskrit entered into Lingayat rituals, Sanskrit schools were established since 1860s. Many present day Mathadhipaties are still unable to come out of the obvious distortion of original Sharan Dharma by the Veerasaivas. This is how the process of Veerasaivikaran, or Hinduization or Sanskritization or Brahmanization of Lingayat Dharma is constantly at work.

Conclusion

Based on the preceding elaborate analysis derived from the published literature of eminent scholars in the last nearly a hundred years it can be concluded that :

(1) The whole concept of Panchacharya is a big hoax played on the ignorant rural Lingayats masses. Their entire existence is founded on unbeliebable myths and contradictions elaborated in this text.

(2) Panchacharyas' presence starts showing up from late fifteenth century and not earlier. This was the period of transition. Vijayanagar Sangam dynasty supported it. Lingayat kingdoms of Keladi and Coorg as well as Mysore Wodeyars patronized the growth of Veerasaivism in the centuries after the collapse of Vijayanagar (1565 AD).

(3) Original Sharana Mutt of Balehalli got slowly transformed from Sharana Dharma into Veerasaiva

tradition from sixteenth century. Other three mutts came up oneby one much later, Until 1698 there wereonly four mutts (Chaturacharyas). The Kashi mutt was established much later after 1840s (from then they became Panchacharyas).

(4) Pachacharyas are not the founders of Lingayat or the Veerasaiva religion.

(5) Among the several factors that led to distortion of Sharana Dharma most important ones are the these:

- (i) Creation of Spurious Veerasaiva literature through Warad Mallappa Lingi Brahman Granthamala of Sholapur, Kashinath Granthamala of Mysore, Veerashaiva Prakashika of Mysore, and publication of certains mutts (e.g. Hubli Murusavir Mutt, Mundargi Annadaneshvar Mutt etc) since 1870s gave further impetus to Veerashaiva;
- (iii) Veerasaiva Agitation of Mysore in 1891;
- (iv) founding of Akhil Bharat Veerasaiva Mahasabha in 1904;
- (v) establishment of training school in Shivayoga Mandir in 1910;
- (vi) starting of a dozen or more Sanskrit Schools since 1860s caused distortion of Sharana Dharma and rise of Brahmanical Veerasaivism of Panchacharyas.

CHAPTER-9

Questions that Panchacharyas and Veerasaivas Must Answer

Veerasaiva is a person following Veerasaiva Dharma or Veerasaivism. Lingayat is a person following Lingayat Dharma. Lingayat religion is also known as Sharan Dharma and Basava Dharma. If Veerasaivas and Lingayats are one and the same, those who claim so must answer the following questions.

Except Ishtalinga, Shatsthal and Ashtavaran there is nothing common between Lingayats and Veerasaivas. However Veerasaivas believe both in Ishtalinga and Sthavarling which the Lingayats do not. Moreover, Veerasaivas perform Ishtalinga prayer as if they are doing sthavarlinga puja (worship) where external rites like use of Sindhur, Turmeric, Vibhuti, flowers, Naivedya (oblations) or Prasad (offer of food), bathing of Ishtalinga, use of Sanskrit ahlokas etc. Ashtavaran are just supportive devices and nothing more.

In all other matters Lingayats and Veerasaivas differ largely. We will narrate them briefly.

(A) Legal Differences

(1) If Veerasaiva and Lingayat were one and the same,

why the four Hindu Personal Laws of today (Hindu Marriage Act 1955, Hindu Succession Act 1956, Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956, and the Hindu adoption and Maintenance Act 1956) do not say that Veerasaiva and Lingayat are one and the same. Indeed, this issue was debated elaborately in the Parliament on two different days in 1955 at the time of discussion on the Hindu Succession Bill. A dozen MPs participated in the debate including the then Koppal MP Mr. Alavandi Shivamurthy Swamy (a Veerasaiva). Mr. Swamy wanted the word 'Lingayat' to be deleted and he had proposed to treat Lingayat and Veerasaiva as one and the same. The then Minister of Legislation and Parliamentary Affairs (Sri Pataskar) in the Government of India refused to accept the amendments (for deleting Lingayat) in the Hindu Succession Bill and it was unanimously passed. The decision of Government of India then was that the two faiths were different and the same position holds good even now.

(B) Fundamentals Differ

Fundamentals of any religion are its founder, its holy book, it philosophy, metaphysics and cosmology, its history. All sects however different do honour these fundamentals. But in case of Lingayat and Veerasaiva all these are different as mentioned below.

Different Founders

(2) If Lingayat and Veersaiva were the same, why are founders of Lingayatism and founders of

Veerasaivism different? (Basavanna Vs Panchacharyas)

Different Founding Periods

(3) If Lingayat and Veerasaiva were the same, why were the two founded at different times? Can one religion be founded several times by several founders assuming different names in different times? (12th century vs Satyayuga)

Puranic Vs Historical

(4) If Veerasaivism and Lingayatism were one and the same, why the two differ on their source—the former is based on baseless imaginary stories from Puranas and the latter is based on solid historical revolution? How can the two be the same?

Different Holy Books

(5) If Veerasaivas and Lingayats were the same, why Lingayats' holybook (Vachanashastra) is different from that of Veerasaivas (Siddhant Sikhamani)?

Panchacharyas Scared of Sharanas

(6) If Veerasaivas and Lingayats were the same, why are Veerashaiva Panchacharyas so scared of Basavanna and Sharanas and why do they reject their principles?

(C) Different Concepts of God

Concept of God is basic to every religion (excepting Buddhism and Jainism). So also religions define the relation between man and God, relation between man and woman and between man and man. Each religion describes the nature of Godhood, number gods, abode of gods, forms of god and so on. No religion (except Hinduism) can have contradictory concepts. But Lingayat and Veerasaiva differ in these basics also, as can be seen in the following narration.

Monotheism Vs Polytheism

(7) If Lingayatism and Veerasaivism were one and the same, how is it that Lingayats believe in only one God Shiva when Veerasaivas worship Parvati, Skanda, Nandi, Veerabhadra and Bringi and other numerous Pramathas derived from Hindu saivism?

Sakar Vs Nirakar God

(8) If Veerashaiva and Lingayat were one and the same, how is it that Lingayats believe exclusively in the invisible, formless Shiva pervading the whole universe when Veerasaivas worship Saakaar Shiva in human form as a man?

Nirgun Shiva Vs Sagun God

(9) If Lingayat and Veerashaiva were the same, how is it that Lingayats believe in Nirguna Shiva who is unmoved by emotions (vikaar) when Veerasaivas believe in all Puranic stories of Shiva as a hunter (Kiratarjunia), Shiva as a married man (Girija Kalyana), Shiva as an angry man (killing Kaamdev by his third eye), Shiva as a great warrier (Andhaka's killing), Shiva as a lover of music (Naadpriya), Shiva as a carrier of Ganga (Gangadhar), Shiva as a wearer of Moon

(Chandrasekhar), and a thousand other such attributes derived from stories in the Shiva Punrana, Linga Purana, Skand Purana, Vayu Purana, Devi Bhagawat purana etc., which portray Shiva in human form suffering from all emotions like anger, hunger, love and affection, sex, jealousy and other vikaaras which the Lingayat Sharanas reject all these puranic stories as "discourse of rogues"?

Pure Advait Vs Shakti-Vishishtadvait

(10) If Lingayat and Veerasaiva were the same, how is it that Lingayat Shiva is all powerful by himself and he does not require Parvati as Shakti to activate him when Veerasaivas contrarily believe in Ardhanaareeshvar or Uma-Maheshvar, Shiva-Shakti combine just like Prrusha-Prakriti concept of Hindu philosophy?

Dwait Vs Adwait

(11) If Veerasaiva and Lingayat were the same, why do the Lingayats reject Samipya, Salokya, Sarupya and Sayujya – the four-stage siddhant of Veerasaivas to attain moksha? Salokya implies existence of a separate world (Loka) called Kailas which the Lingayats do not believe in. Sarupya means the same look as that of Shiva which implies that Shiva has form (presumably human form and that of a man) which the Lingayats deny as for them Shiva is formless and invisible. Samipya means proximity to Shiva implying that Shiva is visible and one can go near him which

Lingayats totally reject. Sayujya means living permanently with Shiva in Kailas. Lingayats do not accept Salokya, Samipya, Sarupya and Sayujya concepts. According to Lingayat doctrine, God lives in everybody. Body is the temple of God. Upon death of the body, the person merges in the God inside him.

Basavanna says "Kaya taa nannu, Jeeva taa Bayalu" (B.V. 863 in Mahasamputa) which means body is but dust and life is but void. Thus dust becomes dust and life merges in the eternal void. Void is God. Jesus Christ also said: "Dust thou Art, to dust returnest".

Sthavarlinga Vs Ishtalinga

(12) If Lingayat and Veerasaiva were the same, why Lingayats forbid worshipping sthavarlinga when Veerasaivas' very existence and survival depend upon the worship of sthavarlinga in the temples and incidentally Ishtalinga worship?

Rejection Vs Acceptance of Kailas, Naraka and Punarjanma

(13) If Veerasaiva and Lingayat were one and the same, how is it that Lingayats do not believe in the existence of Kailas, Naraka and Punarjanma when Veerasaivas not only believe in them but their very religion started because Shiva cursed Renuka in Kailas in the Shiva's Oddolaga (royal court)?

(D) Opposite Social Dimensions

Social dimensions refer to such matters which mostly relate to the structure of a given religious community of followers and how they relate to one another. Social hierarchy, religious rites and customs, certain beliefs and performances, etc. Often sects within the same religious community may differ in these matters. Letus see how Lingayats differ from Veerasaivas in these matters.

Brahmanical Vs Non-Brahmanical

(14) Why do Lingayats totally reject Brahmanical religion while Veerasaivas fought for recognition as Brahmans in the Court of Nizam, in the High Court of Bombay and against the Mysore Census authority?

Varnashram Dharma Vs Its Rejection

(15) If Lingayat and Veershaiva were one and the same, why do Lingayat Sharanas reject Caste System whereas Veerasaivas affirm that Caste System is part of Veerasaivism (as per Mysore Veerashaivas' arguments and an Order of the Government of Mysore in 1911)?

Rejection Vs Acceptance of Tirthyatra, Upavas and Japa

(16) If Lingayat and Veerasaiva were the same, why Lingayats do not go on pilgrimage (Teerthyatra to twelve Jyotirlingas), do not keep fasting (Upavas), do not do Japa (counting beads), and do not undergo penance (Prayaschit) when Veerasaiva perform all these forbidden four?

Gotra Vs No Gotra

(17) If Veerasaiva and Lingayat were one and the same, why Lingayats do not have Gotras whereas Veerasaiva Jangamas, Ayyas and Aradhyas have Gotras like Nandi, Bhringi, Veera, Renuka, Dharuka, Ghantakarna?

Ayyachar Vs No Ayyachar

(18) If Lingayat and Veerasaiva were the same, why do Veerashaiva Jangamas, Ayyas and Aradhyas perform Ayyachar only to the boys and not girls when Basavanna, the founder of Lingayat religion, rejected Upanayana and Janeu?

Homa, Astrology, Vastu etc. Rejected Vs Accepted

(19) If Veerasaiva and Lingayat were the same, why is it that Lingayats do not perform Homa and Yagna nor believe in Astrology, Vastu, and Panchang while Veerasaiva do all the four with great trust in their efficacy?

Kannada Vs Sanskrit

(20) If Lingayat and Veershaiva were the same, why Lingayats do not follow Vedic Shlokas, customs and rites based on numerous Puranic stories which they reject as non-sense whereas Veerasaivas depend solely on the Puranas to explain the origin, the development, the very content and beliefs, rites and customs of their faith?

Basav Jayanti Vs Renuka Jayanti

(21) Since Maharashtra and Karnataka governments

declared Akshay Tratiya as the day of Basava Jayanti to honour Basavanna as the founder of Lingayatism, Panchacharyas are demanding government to declare Renuka Jayanti as a public holiday.

This is nothing but jealousy and hatred of Panchacharya and Veerasaivas have towards Lingayatism and Basavanna. In this context, following facts are important and need to be noted:

(i) How can any governments declare Renuka Jayanti who had no parents, who was not born but descended from Kailas, who was born from lifeless stone statues, whose date of birth itself cannot be known?

(ii) Veerasaiva religion is claimed to have been founded by five Acharyas. Why only Renuka Jayanti? What about Marularadhya Jayanti? What about Ekoramaradhya Jayanti? What about Panditaradhya Jayanti? What about Vishvaradhya Jayanti? All the five claim to be the founders of Veerashaiva faith!

(iii) But can anyone tell who were the parents of the five? What were the dates of birth of these five Aradhyas? Without knowing the parents, without knowing the precise dates of birth how can a Jayanti be declared? Does anyone know the date in Kritayuga, 38 lakh years back, when Renuka came down to Bhuloka and was born from Stone linga?

(iv) Knowing the above cited problems, some Veerasaivas are asking that government should celebrate 'Yugamanotsava'! But which Yuga? According to Hindu Chronology there are only four Yugas – Krita, Treta, Dwapar and Kaliyuga. Which Yugamanotsava are the Veerasaivas asking to celeberate since all five Acharyas were born in each Yuga with different names?

Thus the request of Veerasaivas is strange and lacks substance. It is motivated by their jealousy of the rising trend of Basavanna and his religion.

(v) All the five Aradhyas claim they are Ayonijas (not born from mother's birth canal). But can anyone be born from the lifeless stone statues kept in the temples?

Many more of such questions can be raised. But the fact remains that Lingayat and Veerasaiva cannot be the same. They are as different as chalk and cheese!

Claims of Panchacharyas and their own history are a set of palpable stories no rational person can agree with or belive in.

References

1) Akkurmath S., 2004, Shivagamagalli Veerashaiva Dharma, Rambhapuri Veerashaiva, Somshodhan Samsthe, Balehalli.

2) Basavaraju L., 1963, Sivadas Geetanjali, Jagadguru Sivaratrishvar Granthamale, Mysuru.

3) Bijjaragi Chandrakant, 2009, Kurubar Kulaguru Revanasiddharu, Shailachandra Prakashan, Bijapur.

4) Boratti V.K., 2020, Mysuru Rajyad Hale Janagatigalu — Lingayataru mattu Chaturvrna Nambike, JLM, Bangalore.

5) Brown P.C. 1840, "Essays on the Creed, Customs and literature of Jangamas", Madras Journal of Literature and Science, October.

6) Chandrashekharaswamy, 1988, Veerashaiva Pancha Peetha Parampare, Shaïva Bharati Shodha Pratsthan, Varanasi.

7) Chidanand Murthy,
    - (i) "Antim Tere", in Sadhane.......
    - (ii) Veerashaiva Dharma mattu Bharateeya Sanskriti, 2000, Minchu Prakashan, Bangalore.

8) Devendrappa Jaji, 2007, Adhraru Chitrisid Basavanna, Lingayat Adhyana Samsthe, Gadag (translation of Badalu Ramayya's book of the same title in Telugu).

9) Dubois, Abbey, 1816, Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies, reprinted by Rupa Publishers, New Delhi.

10) Enthoven, E.R. 1920, 'Lingayat' in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, (ed) James Hastings.

11) Gundashatri, N., 1935, Mysuru Electric Press Sthapakarad Pundit Kashinath Shastrigal Nija Jeevan Charitre, Mysore.

12) Gunjal, S.R., 1999, Vishvavidyalayagalalli Veerashaiva Samshodhane, Divyadan Prakashan, Loni, Indi Taluk, Vijayapura district.

13) Hiremath, R.C., 1985, Mahayatre, Hampi Kannada University.

14) Ishvaran, Hiremallur, 1983, Religion and Society Among the Lingayats of South India, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi.

15) Holy Bible, 2005, Tindale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, USA.

16) Holy Quran, translated by Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi, 2000, Shanti Prakashan Mangalore.

17) Ja.Ch.Ni., Jagadguru Adirenukaru, quoted by Laxman Kunte, 2017 in Lingayat Swatantra Dharma.

18) Jirage B.S., 1923, Who Are Founders of Veershaiva Dharma?

19) Kunte Laxman, 2017, Lingayat Swatantra Dharma, Basva Dharma Prachar Sansthe, Bidar.

20) Kalaburgi, M.M.,
    (i) "Veerashaivad Itihas mattu Bhugol";
    (ii) "Panchacharyar Nija Swaroop";
    (iii) "Lingayat, Veerashaiva and Dr. M. Chidanandmurthy";
    (iv) "Karnatakad Sharan Jangamar Mele Andhrad Aradhya Jangamar Savari" in Lingayat Swatantra Dharma, Edited by Dr. Veeranna Rajur, F.G. Halakatti Samshodhan Kendra, Vijayapur.

21) Kundur Sivabasava Swamigalu, 2004, Siddhand Sikhamani mattu Srikar Bhashya: Nijad Niluvu, Sharana Sahitya Parishattu, Mysuru.

22) Mahadevappa N.G.,2015, Basavanna: Lingayat Dharma Sthapakaru, Vachana Adhyan Kendra, Belagavi.

23) Mallappa T.N. in the Preface to Channamallikarjun's Sri. Revansiddharu, published by Channabasavaswamigalu, Byadagi.

24) H. Nagaraj M.G., Kodagin Haleri Vansh, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Karnataka.

25) Nandimath S.C.
    (i) "Veerashaivar Itihas mattu Dharma" in Shivanubhav 1961;
    (ii) "Veerashaivapara Amagalu", Jnanaprasar 1-6, 1967;
    (iii) "Vatulshuddhakyatantra", "Paramashvar", "Sukshma", "Veeragam", and "Chandrajnanagam" all republished in S.C.Nandimathar Lekhanagalu, 2007, pages 337- 381, Kannada Pustaka Pradhikar, Bangalore.

26) Pawate D.C., 1973, article in Indian Express, Bangalore.

27) Pujari, Siddharam, 2000, Veerashaiva/Lingayat Dharmad Math-Peethagal Muladhar, Basava Chetan Prakashan, Miraj.

28) Prebisch, Charles S.,2003,The A to Z of Buddhism, Vision Books, New Delhi.

29) Sadasivayya H, undated, A Discourse on Veerashaivism:an Unwritten Chapter in the Religious History of India, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

30) Sakhare, M.R. 1942, History and Philosophy of Lingayat Religion, Karnataka University, Dharwad.

31) Savadattimath S., 2017, Veerashaiva-Lingayat (Itihas mattu Nija Sangatigalu), Sri Jagadguru Rambhapureeshvar Granth Prakashan, Hubli.

32) Siddhant Sikhamani, 2011, Edited by S.R. Siddhalingappa, Shaiva Bharati Shodha Pratisthan, Varanasi.

33) Thurston Edgar, 1919, Castes and Tribes of South India.

34) Tipperudraswami, H., 2015 (reprinted), Sharan Sahitya-Samskrit Adhyayan, Vachan Adhyan Kendra, Belagavi.

35) Vidyashankar, 2007, Sri Revansiddharu, Basavatatva Prachar mattu Samshodhan Kendra, Bangalore.

Annexures

Annexure-1

Who Founded Lingayat Religion - Basavanna or Panchacharyas?

Excluding Puranic mythology of Veerasaivas, all the other available evidence suggests that Veerasaiva Panchacharyas are not and cannot be the founders of either Sharana Dharma or even Veerasaiva Dharma. The summary of the major evidence on this is presented below.

Mr. M.R. Sakhare (1942), after examining a whole lot of available evidence about the founder of Veersasaiva/Lingayat religion, asks: "Who then is the founder of the faith?" He asserts that undoubtedly it is Basavanna who founded it. He offers **four sets of important medieval books "which unequivocally hold that Basavanna was the founder of the faith."**

The first set consists of seven books of twelfth and thirteenth centuries which unequivocally hold that Basavanna founded the religion of Ishtalinga. These books are:

(i) Harihara's ***Basavaraja Devar Ragale (1220 AD)***,

(ii) Palkurike Somanatha's ***Basava Puranamu (1240 AD)***

(iii) Kereya Padmarasa's ***Deekshabodhe (1250 AD)***,

(iv) Kumar Padmarasa's ***Sanand Charita (1280)***,
(v) ***and Sivadvaitatatva Siddhant***,
(vi) Panditaradhya's ***Sivatatvasaar (1200 AD)***, and
(vii) Raghavank's ***Siddharam Charitre 13th entury)***.

All these authors have held that Basavanna was the founder of the religion.

The second set of five books also confirm that Basavanna founded the religion of Ishtalinga. They are:

(i) Palkurike Somanath's ***Gana-sahasranam*** (13th century),
(ii) Chamarasa's ***Prabhuling Leele*** (1430),
(iii) Maggeya Mayideva's ***Shataktraya*** (1478),
(iv) Maritontadarya's ***Siddheshvar Charitre*** (1500),
(v) Keladi King Basavappa Naik's ***Sivatatva Ratnakar*** (1700).

Third set of another seven books of Veersaiva authors also consider Basavanna as the founder of Lingayat/Veerashaiva religion. They are:

(i) Gururaj Kavi's ***Gururaj Charitre*** (14th century),
(ii) Neelakanthacharya's ***Aradhya Charitre*** (1845),
(iii) ***Veeramaheshvar Sangrah*** (Shlokas 1-9-13),
(iv) ***Veerashaiva Pradeepike*** (Shlokas 1-3-4),
(v) ***Panditaradhya Charitre***,
(vi) ***Veerashaiva Sangrah*** (Shlokas 1-14-17), and
(vii) **Veerashaiva Sudhanidhi** (Shlokas 2-4).

And finally, the fourth set of evidence in support of Basavanna being the founder of the faith comes from numerous Vachanas of twelfth century Sharanas. Starting from Allam Prabhu, Siddharameshvar, Channabasavanna, Akkamahadevi and more than fifty Sharanas in nearly 1000 Vachanas (Kalaburgi Marg-7 2018) almost other more than a hundred Sharanas have openly praised in their Vachanas that Basavanna was the originator of Sharana dharma or Lingayat.

Thus it can be said clearly that Panchacharyas are not the founders of Veerasaivism or Lingayatism.As indicated in the first chapter, the Panchacharyas and their followers base all their claims on the books, principles and practices of Aradhya Saiva Brahmins of Andhra Pradesh. They initially accepted Sharana Dharma and later reverted to more Brahmanical beliefs and practices which are opposed to Sharan Dharma.

When were the Panchapeethas established their faith is a question on which least is known. Dr.Kalaburgi says that during the reign of first dynasty of Vijayanagar (14th and 15th centuries) most probably the FOUR Peethas seem to have come to prominence one after the other and the last one— Kashi Peetha — was established much later.

Dr. Chidanandmurthy, a staunch Veerasaiva author, also says that these Peethas were later creations. He further says that these mutts twisted the names of four Sharanas – Revanasiddha, Maruladeva, Panditaradhya and Ekorama for their own purposes.

The two Agamas – Suprabhedagama and Svayambhu Agama mentioning the name of Kashipeetha were obviously written after seventeenth century since Kashipeetha did not exist till late eighteenth century. The pre-existing Gosai Mutt was named after the last Swamiji by name Mallikarjun Gosai, incidentally a Lingayat, died. His mutt was named Jangamawadi Mutt (Bijjaragi 2009).

Siddhant Sikhamani does not even recognize the four other Acharyas except Renuka or Revanasiddha. Harihar describes Renuka as a Pramatha who descended to Bhloka to experience Shiva's curse and not for founding a religion.

Further, the epigraphic information suggests that the first peetha, i.e., Renukacharya peetha at Balehalli was established in1435 AD as a centre of Sharan Dharma (Kalaburgi Marg 4). Other three Peethas might have come up later. Till 1698 there were only four Peethas. Almost every other book written till that year mentions only four Peethas (Chaturacharyas).

As late as 1840, Mr. P.C. Brown, mentions only four peethas. Kashipeetha is the most recent one.

It was founded after the death of Mallikarjun Gosai, the head of a Gosai Mutt at Kasi. Based on these facts, the claims of Panchacharyas that their mutts are very ancient, that their faith is primordial and that they emerged from Stone lingas etc are all concoctions.

Five repeated claims of Panchacharyas are strange:

(i) that their faith was founded by Lord Shiva himself. (There is no such religion in the whole world which was founded by God directly. Every religion is a human institution created by great men of those respective periods of time);

(ii) that their faith was established in Kritayuga (Kritayuga was started according to Hindu Puranas 38 lakhs of years back. Modern human beings evolved only 40 thousand years back. When there were no properly evolved human beings how can a new religion be founded and by whom?);

(iii) that Renuka lived from Kritayuga to Kaliyuga (38 lakhs of years);

(iv) that the Panchacharyas descended from Kailas/heaven (this idea is borrowed from Hindu Puranas), and

(v) that they emerged from stone lingas (this is another blind belief).

If five Acharyas were born at the same time to preach Veerasaiva dharma why the following discripancies are there among them?

a) Rambhapuri Peetha had 121 predecessors
b) Ujjini Peetha 112 gurus
c) Shrishail Peetha 28 gurus
d) Kedar Peetha 323 gurus and
e) Kashi Peetha 85 gurus.

These datails show that they were not founded at the same time. Bijjaragi tells that these questionable chronologies are very recent creations by the Panchacharyas. In 1928 Dr. S.C.Nandimath had stated that none of these Peethas has an authentic history.

Secondly, they originated in different places far flung from one another in four different states of India.

Each of the four states has different languages spoken by the people there. But all Panchacharyas mother tongue is only Kannada.

There are no Veerasaivas/Lingayats in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (Ujjain). So, for whom the three of the five Panchacharyas founded their faith in those areas?

Thirdly, in all these five Peethas including those in UP and Uttarakhand only Jangam persons from Maharashtra or Karnataka are chosen as Peethadhipatis. Why can they not find persons from the respective states?

If Renuka was born in Telangana from Kollipaki Someshvaralinga why did he leave that place and come to thick jungles of Western ghats nearly 800 miles away from Kollipaki? (Eastern Ghats were there nearby). Similarly, why did Ekorama who was born from Bheemeshvar Sthavalinga of Draksharama in Godavari district ofAndhra Pradesh migrate to settle in Kedar and preach his religion where no Lingayat/Veerasaiva exists? The same question can be posed to Marularadhya who is claimed to have founded his mutt at Ujjain of Madhya Pradesh but settled down in Kudligi Taluk of Bellari district in Karnataka.

Panchacharyas' origin, existence and other aspects are all based on imaginary Pouranic myths and blind beliefs. These blind beliefs are woven around a few historical facts just to mystify history. The basic purpose of mystification of simple facts is to show that their faith is of divine origin (Apourusheya) not man-made (Pourusheya); that their faith is very ancient; that they themselves are demigods descended from heaven; that they are timeless persons and such are the blind beliefs on which these Panchacharyas have survived by stupefying lay people.

Annexure-2

Discovery of Vachanas and Beginning of a New Era

Large number Vachanas were unearthed from the palm scripts, copper plates and inscriptions kept hidden in the dark rooms of Lingayat mutts and leading Lingayat families. They were published between 1920s and 2016.

Newly discovered Vachana Sahitya received huge applause and publicity. Vachanas instantly became extremey popular. This was the period (1920s to 1960s) of increasing levels of literacy and education among Lingayats and the growing awareness of democratic ideals and freedom Movement followed by independence. Since Basava tatvas were the embodiments of the democratic ideals and basic rights of all human beings, the discoveries of vachanas became a point of Lingayat identity which fitted well into the ethos of the time.

The popularity of Vachanas and Sharanas had tremendous impact on the Lingayat community. Their ramifications were too many. The major ones are mentioned below:

1) The scholars, Lingayat Mathas, and the people started realizing the falsehoods created by the

Veerasaiva writers mentioned by Dr. L. Basavaraju and S.Savadattimath quoted before. **This led to the prolific use of Lingayat in place of Veerasaiva by the scholars since 1980s.**

2) Research into, publication and proliferation of Vachana Sahitya grew by leaps and bounds. Today Vachana Sahitya has more than ten thousand books to its credit and 25 journals are in circulation and at the same time Veerasaiva literature of previous centuries has entered the oblivion.

3) Most of the institutions (such Veerashaiva Boarding, Veerasaiva Hotel, Veerashaiva Bank, Veerasaiva Research Institute, etc.) were re-named (as Lingayat Boarding, Lingayat Education Society, Lingayat Hotel, Basaveshvar Bank, Basaveshvar School and so on).

4) As a matter of fact ninety percent of the people in North and Central Karnataka do not know nor understand nor use the word Veerasaiva.

5) Since 1965 ninety five percent of the nearly 3000 statues of Basavanna astride horse were erected in central places of almost every big village, town or city in Karnataka, Southern Maharashtra and Telengana.

6) Two statues of Basavanna measuring 105 feet high in Gadag city and Basavakalyan have been established and a third one of double that height is under construction in Chitradurga.

7) One such statue adores the premises of Indian Parliament recognizing him as the pioneer in the creation of a democratic social order. No statue of any other religious group is erected within the premises of our Parliament. It shows the importance of Basavanna and the movement he created.

8) A bust of Basavanna has also been installed on the banks of river Themes in Lambeth borough of London city recently which was opened by the Prime Minister of India.

9) Karnataka University, Gulbarga University, Mysore University and Mangalore University have established special chairs and centres for the study of and research into Basava philosophy and Vachana literature.

10) In 1968 the Karnataka Government celebrated in a grand style the Eighth Centenary Year of Basavanna's birth. These celebrations created greater awareness of the truth about Lingayats and their unique religion in opposition to Veerasaivism.

11) Lingayats began celebrating Basavanna's Birth Day since 1912 (on Vaishakh Shuddha Akshay Tritiya). The Veerasaiva Panchacharyas and their branch mutts had misled ignorant rural Lingayats to celebrate it by worshipping bulls instead of Basavanna, the founder of Lingayat religion. The exposure of the Veerasaiva bluff led to the grand

scale celebrations every year of Basava Jayanti throughout Karnataka, parts of Telangana and southern Maharashtra.

12) Now Basava Jayanti is declared as a State Holiday in Karnataka and Maharashtra and it is celebrated officially like Ram Navami, Krishnashtami, Buddha Purnima, Vaishakhi etc.

13) All India Sharana Sahitya Parishat was also established in 1986 to propagate Sharanas' Vachanas as against the Veerasaiva literature of the previous three centuries.

14) Realising the importance and the relevance of the universal appeal, the democratic and egalitarian nature of Lingayat religion and Basava Philosophy, the Karnataka Government published all Vachanas of 12th century sharanas discovered so far into 14 bulky volumes first time in 1993, second time in 15 vlumes in 2001 and third time in 2016 in thousands of cheaply priced copies.

15) Government of India released the commemorative coins and stamps of Mahatma Basaveshvar on his birthday in 2006.

16) Now, Government of Maharashtra and Government of Karnataka have by order made it compulsory to display the photograph of Basavanna in all public offices since 2016. Today all public offices are adorned with the Portraits of Basavanna.

17) Government of Karnatak has instituted an Annual Award to persons who have done commendable

work in propagating Basava Tatvas. The Award carries rupees ten lakhs (bigger than Jnanpeeth Literary award in India).

18) Many leading mutts and Lingayat organizations also instituted Basava Awards to honour persons who propagate Basava philosophy and do constructive work.

19) The ABVMS tried in 1940 to reverse its 1904 resolution in its Executive Committee Meeting chaired by Barrister M.S. Sirdar to change the name from Veerashaiva to Lingayat. But the Veersaiva forces have prevented its implementation so far.

20) Dr. D.C. Pawate (former Governor of Punjab and five term Vice-Chancellor of Karnataka University) who was the President of ABVMS for nine years wrote a strongly worded article in Indian Express dated 23-12-1973 condemning the vehemence and audacity of Veerasaivas resisting change.

21) However, the ABVMS since 1970s has been **petitioning Central Government to recognize its religion as a separate entity.** It even filed a case against late Mate Mahadevi in the Supreme Court against her changing the pen-name of Basavanna.

22) **Now ABVMS has been clearly saying that Lingayat is NOT a part or sect of Hinduism.** Its website even now says that Basavanna founded this religion. **Without giving the complete and correct background information about the developments**

that shook Veerasaivas, Veerasaiva writers like late Dr. Chidanand Murthy, Dr. Savadattimath, Dr. M. Shivsakumarswami, C. Shivakumarswamy and some others and their Pancha Peethas are distorting the facts and the truth just to mislead the gullible public to save their own skin and that of their sect.

It is strange but true that in south Karnataka region, most Lingayats of all sub-groups prefer to call themselves as Veersaivas just for the sake of false notion of dignity! Whereas in North Ksarnataka Lingayats are not familiar with Veerasaiva. Largest concentration Lingayats is in North Karnatka and southern Maharashtra. These regional variations are due to the historical developments in the erstwhile princely state of Mysore in latter half of 19th century which are sufficiently explained elsewhere. They were the days of intense competition between Lingayats and Brahmans in every field. Veerasaiva scholars who were Asthan Pundits in the Royal Court of Mysore wanted to prove that they were not less than Brahmans. For that purpose, they distorted the whole history and philosophy of Sharan Dharma. That misleading movement and agitation are the root cause of not only the regional variations but also of all the mess in today's the Lingayat community. ***Historians have so far not properly assessed the importance of Mysore Lingayat agitation in the distrortion of the original Lingayat faith.***

To bolster their arguments the Panchacharyas have gone on falsely claiming that Basavanna accepted Veerashaiva dharma and reformed it. Neither did he receive any deeksha from anyone nor did he preach Veerasaiva dharma. His religion stands exactly in opposition to the major tenets of Veerashaivism.

The fact that Ishtalinga, Shatsthal Siddhant and Ashtavaran are also found among Veerasaiva is a proof of another fact that Veerasaivas got merged with Basava dharma in the twelfth century. But like one of their Gurus, Panditaradhya, Veerasaivas did not totally give up their old beliefs and practices. Because of this, in almost everything —except Ishtalinga, Ashtavaran and Shatsthal— every other feature of Veerasaivism differs and contradicts Basava dharma. Thus Veerasaivas, at best may be described as partly Lingayat and largely Hindu Saivas!

The claims of Panchapeethas as founders of Veerasaivism or their claims to greater antiquity are not supported by the the history. No reference is found about these Panchapeethas either in any ancient Hindu books or in twelfth century books of Lingayatism. Ramayana, Mahabharat, Vedas, eighteen Puranas, Eighten Dharmashatras or anyother Hindu historical sources do not contain a word about any of the Panchacharyas amd their peethas. Their holybook, Siddhant Sikhamani itself is a work of 14th - 15th century notwithstanding its fantastic claims - otherwise references to it would have been available in older Hindu books. They have only their strange puranas and no known history. Of late they are busy in creating unfounded stories dubbed as history by concocting bogus names of pontinffs in their line.

The tell tale differences between Lingayats and Veerasaivas can be seen in the daily lives of both. Thus Lingayats and Veerasaivas can never be the same. Those who are forcing everyone to believe that the two are one and the same have only political agenda to mobilize the huge vote bank of the two different faiths. Such attempts are only the political gimmicks to gain power and nothing else!

●

Annexure-3

Veerasaiva Panchacharyas Were Aradhya Brahmins

Veerasaiva Panchacharyas seem to have come from the Aradhya Brahmin background as revealed by the following pieces of evidence:

(i) Aradhyas are a unique segment among Brahmins: like all other Brahmins they wear Janeu and go through Upanayana ceremony. Thereafter they also go through Lingadharan ceremony. It is a ceremony initiating a novice to wear Linga icon and pray.

But Lingadharana is not compulsory to everyone. Only those who like to are given that Diksha. The late south Indian Singer S.P. Balsubranyam was an Aradhya Brahmin. His name itself was S.P. which stood for Sripati Panditaradhyalu mentioned above.

Linga is a small icon of Siva. It is worn always on the body till death. Thus most Aradhya Brahmins wear both Janeu and Linga on their bodies. It is mentioned (by Giriraju.... in Sivatatvasar) that Mallikarjuna Panditaradhya refused to remove his

Janeu while trying to meet Basavanna who insisted that it should be thrown away if he wanted to join Basavanna.

P.C. Brown in his field study in Andhra area has observed that Aradhya Brahmins are hated by other Brahmin sects as well as Jangamas (Lingayats) alike. That being the fact, he was astonished how four Aradhyas (Renuka, Marula, Ekoram andPanditaradhya) found entry among Jangamas (Lingayats of Andhra). From his evidence it may be safely inferred that until 1840 there were only four Veerasaiva Peethas. Kasi Peetha came up later in the name of Vishvaradhya.

(ii) Most interesting point is that Veerasaiva Panchacharyas attribute their origin to the Puranik characters called ***Renuka, Marula, Ekoram, Panditaradhya and Vishvaradhya. These very same names are also found among the Aradhya Brahmins.***

Among the Aradhyas Sripati Pandit, Manchan Pandit and Mallikarjun pandita are known as "pandit triya". Revansiddha, Marulasiddha and Ekoramsiddha are "Siddha Triyas" and Vishvaradhya, Vemaradhya and Udbhataradhya are called "Aradhya Triya". There are also three Acharyas known as "Acharya Triya". The four Triyas together there are 12 Gurus for Aradhyas. ***Suprisingly, the five original Gurus of Veerasaivism (Panchacharyas) figure among these 12 Gurus of Aradhya Brahmins.These***

five are Mallikarjuna Pandit of "Pundit Triya", Revansiddha, Marulasiddha and Ekoramsiddha of "Siddha Triya" and Vishvaradhya of "Aradhya Triya".

Based on these facts, Bijjaragi (2009), Kalaburgi (Marg-4), Chaidanand Murthy (Sadhane, 2015) claim that misusing the names of the five out of 12 Aradhya Brahmins, the Veerasaivas created the five Peethas and all the concocted literature related about them.

(iii) One Aradhya Brahmin by name Sripati Pandit wrote Srikar Bhashya, supposedly a treatise on Brahmasutras. He is the Guru of Aradhyas. ***Veerasaivas also place great importance on Srikar Bhashya (Immadi Sivabasava Swamigalu 2003).***

(iv) Aradhya Brahmins consider "Sivanubhavasutra", "Siddhant Sikhamani", "Shankarsamhita", "Visheshárth Prakashika", "Vatulottar" etc., as their holy books. ***Veerasaiva Panchacharyas also give great importance to those books (Bijjargi 2009 page 346).***

(v) It is no wonder that in 1890, the Veerasaivas of Mysore led by four Aradhyas, namely, P.R. Karibasavashstri, N.R. Karibasavashastri, Yajman Veerasangappa and his son Virupkshiah demanded "Veerasaiva Brahmin" status for their community and got it. In doing so they fooled all other Non-Aradhya Lingayats making them believe that they were also Veerasaivas and Veerasaiva Brahmins!

While Lingayats of Karnataka and Maharashtra, Jangamas of Andhra Pradesh, Veerasaivas and many Aradhya Brahmins (also of Andhra Pradesh) all wear Linga icon on their bodies and smear Vibbuti on their foreheads and arms, each of these groups differs on almost all other beliefs, practices and rituals - that remain unknown to ordinary citizens of the said groups.

●

In order to bring out the truth that Veerasaiva and Lingayat are not one and the same, Dr. Jamdar in this work has made use of the statements of Veerasaivas; expositions given in the religious texts of Veersaivas; the reasons why the word "Veerasaiva' was used by scholars in the past; the delusions of Veerasaivas towards Brahminism ; the tradition of Aradhya Brahmins; the effects of the discovery of Vachana literature; the serious questions to which Panchacharyas to give answers and such other matters for objective and critical discussion – thereby appealing to the members of the community to arrive at appropriate conclusions.

It is desirable that retired Lingayat officers, employees, artists, writers, industrialists, agriculturists and all other members of the community come forward to join hands with 'Jagathika Lingayat Mahasabha' and Dr. S.M. Jamdar who is striving tirelessly - even in his retired life - for the rejuvenation as well as obtaining independent status of the Lingayat faith.

We should not forget that the agitation and the achievements of the present generation would serve to protect not just the present but also the future generations. Hence, by joining their hands together Lingayats should demonstrate to the world that this is a well orgnised, principled and disciplined community.

Jagathika Lingayata Mahasabha
No.53, 2nd Main Road, 3rd Cross, Chakravathi Layout
Palace Road, Bengaluru 560 020